The Cochin Municipal Act (Amendment) Bill

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* I beg to move that the Cochin Municipal Act Amendment Bill be taken up and finally passed.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar *(Secretary to Government):* I second it.

Motion put and carried

The Government Trading Taxation Bill

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja *(Advocte-General):* I move that the Government Trading Taxation Bill be taken up and passed.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar *(Secretary to Government):* I second it.

Motion put and carried

The Cochin Transfer of Property Act (Amendment) Bill

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja *(Advocate-General):* I move that the Cochin Transfer of Property Act Amendment Bill be taken up and finally passed.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar *(Secretary to Government):* I second it.

Motion put and carried

The Cochin Town Councils Bill—(cont.)

*മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. ആർ. വിശ്വംഭരൻ: സർ, ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട ഡോക്ടർ എ. ആർ. മേനോൻ അവർകൾ അവതരിപ്പിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന കൊച്ചിൻ ടൗൺ കൌൺസിൽസ്" ബില്ലിനെ ഞാൻ പ്രതിക്ഷേധിക്കുന്നു.

Mr. V. J. Mathai *(Planters):* On a point of order, Sir, does not the Hon'ble President think that it is better while referring to the Hon'ble Minister to refer to him as such rather than to call him by his name. *(Laughter).*

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. ആർ. വിശ്വംഭരൻ: എന്റെ മാന്യസ്നേഹിതൻ തൊട്ടടുക്കുടെ മെമ്പർ പറഞ്ഞതിനോടു ഞാനും യോജിക്കുന്നു. പക്ഷെ ഇന്നലെ ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മന്ത്രി അവർകൾ അദ്ധേഹത്തിന്റെ ബിൽ അവതരിപ്പിച്ചപ്പോൾ അതു് ഏതു നിലയിലാണു് അവതരിപ്പിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതു് എന്നുള്ളതിനെക്കുറിച്ചു് ചിലസംഗതികൾ അദ്ധേഹത്തിന്റെ പ്രസംഗത്തിൽതന്നെ പറഞ്ഞുകണ്ടതുകൊണ്ടാണു" ഞാൻ മനഃപൂർവ്വമായി എന്റെ പ്രസ്താവനയിൽ ഇപ്രകാരം പറയാൻ കാരണമായിട്ടുള്ളതു്. നഗരങ്ങൾ നമ്മുടെ രാജ്യത്തിൽ അത്യാവശ്യ

*Speech not corrected by the hon'ble member.

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മാണ്". നഗരങ്ങൾ പരിഷ്കൃതങ്ങളാക്കിത്തീർക്കണമെന്നുള്ള കാര്യത്തെപ്പറ്റിയും യാതൊരഭിപ്രായവ്യത്യാസവും ഈ സഭക്കോ, ഈ നാട്ടിലെ ജനങ്ങൾക്കോ ഉണ്ടാകാൻ ഇടയില്ല. കൊച്ചി രാജ്യത്തിൽ പഞ്ചായത്തുകൾ കഴിഞ്ഞ കുറെ കൊല്ലങ്ങളായി പ്രവർത്തനം നടത്തിവരികയാലും സ്വയംഭരണകാര്യങ്ങളിൽ ജനങ്ങൾക്കു കൂടുതൽ പരിശീലനം അതിൽ പരിചയം സിദ്ധിക്കാനും ഇടയായിട്ടുള്ളതുകൊണ്ടും ചില പഞ്ചായത്തുകൾ ഗ്രാമങ്ങൾ എന്നുള്ള നിലയെ അതിക്രമിച്ചു നഗരങ്ങൾ എന്നുള്ള നിലയിൽ എത്തിയിട്ടുള്ളതുകൊണ്ടും ഇവിടെ ഒരു ടൌൺകൌൺസിൽസ് ബില്ലിന്റെ അത്യാവശ്യം ഉണ്ടെന്നുമാണല്ലോ ഈ ബില്ലിന്റെ പീഠികയിൽ ബിൽ കൊണ്ടുവരാനുള്ള കാരണത്തെക്കുറിച്ചു പറഞ്ഞുകാണുന്നതു". ഈ ബില്ലിനെ എതിർക്കുന്ന കാര്യത്തിൽ എനിക്കു പ്രധാനമായി ഈ സഭയുടെ മുമ്പാകെ കൊണ്ടുവരാനുള്ളതു" നമ്മുടെ ഗ്രാമങ്ങൾ, പഞ്ചായത്തു ഭരണത്തിലിരിക്കുന്ന ഗ്രാമങ്ങൾ, ഒരു ടൌൺകൌൺസിൽസ് ഭരണം നടത്തുന്നതിനുള്ള പയ്യാപ്തമായ വിധത്തിൽ പോഷിച്ചിട്ടില്ലെന്നുള്ളതാണു". ശ്രീലോകത്തിന്റെ ആരംഭത്തെക്കുറിച്ചു വേദപുസ്തകത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞുകണ്ടിട്ടുണ്ടു", വെളിച്ചമുണ്ടാകട്ടെഎന്നുപറഞ്ഞു, വെളിച്ചമുണ്ടായിയെന്നു". അതുപോലെ ഇപ്പോൾ നഗരങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടാകട്ടെ എന്നുപറയുകയാണു". അതിനാൽ നഗരങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടാകുകയും ചെയ്യും. ഗ്രാമങ്ങൾ വ്യവസായങ്ങളാലും വാണിജ്യങ്ങളാലും അഭിവൃദ്ധി പ്രാപിച്ചു വില്ലേജ് പഞ്ചായത്തു നിയമത്തിൽ ഉൾപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുള്ള അധികാരങ്ങൾകൊണ്ടു മാത്രം ഭരണം നടത്താൻ സാധിക്കാത്ത ഒരു നിലയിൽ ഗ്രാമങ്ങൾക്കു വരുന്നതിനുമുമ്പു ഇങ്ങനെയൊരു നിയമനിർമ്മാണംകൊണ്ടു ഗ്രാമങ്ങളെ നഗരങ്ങളാക്കി പരിണമിപ്പിക്കുകയെന്നുള്ളതു ആശാസ്യമായ ഒരു നയമാണെന്നു ഞങ്ങൾക്കു തോന്നുന്നില്ല. ഈ ബില്ലിലെ പ്രധാനമായ ഒരു വ്യവസ്ഥ ടൌൺ കൌൺസിൽസിനു നികുതി ചുമത്തുന്നതിനുള്ള അധികാരം കൊടുത്തിരിക്കുന്നു എന്നുള്ളതാണു". നികുതി ചുമത്തുന്ന കാര്യത്തിൽ വാസ്തവത്തിൽ ഈ സഭ ഒരിക്കലും ഭയപ്പെടേണ്ടതില്ല, ഭയപ്പെടുകയുമില്ലെന്നുള്ളതു ഇതിനുമുമ്പു നടന്ന വാഗ്വിതിവാദങ്ങളാൽ വ്യക്തമായി സ്ഥാപിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടു". എങ്കിലും നിലനികുതിയായും, മറ്റു നികുതികളായും നാം കൊടുത്തുവരുന്ന സംഖ്യകൾക്കു പുറമെ ഒരു സംഖ്യ, ടൌൺ കൌൺസിൽസിന്റെ ഭരണത്തിനു", ടൌൺ കൌൺസിലിന്റെ ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരുടെ ശമ്പളത്തിനും മറ്റുവിധങ്ങളിൽ ചിലവഴിക്കാനും വേണ്ടിവരുന്ന ഒരു സംഖ്യ കൊടുക്കാൻ ഗ്രാമങ്ങൾ നഗരങ്ങളെന്നു വ്യാഖ്യാനിക്കുന്നുണ്ടെങ്കിലും അതുകൊണ്ടുമാത്രം ഗ്രാമീണ ജനങ്ങൾ പ്രാപ്തരാണൊയെന്നു ആലോചിക്കേണ്ടതാണു". അതിനാൽ ഈ ബില്ലിലെ പ്രധാന അംശമായ നികുതി ചുമത്തുന്നതിനുള്ള അധികാരം, നികുതി ചുമത്താനുള്ള വ്യവസ്ഥ രാജ്യത്തിലെ ജനങ്ങൾക്കു ഗുണകരമായിരിക്കുമോ എന്നുള്ള കാര്യം ബലമായി സംശയിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. പഞ്ചായത്തു ഭരണം വളരെ അഭിവൃദ്ധികരമായി നടത്തിക്കൊണ്ടുപോകുന്നു എന്നു നമുക്കഭിമാനിക്കാൻ സാധിക്കയില്ലെന്നാണു് എന്റെ വിനീതമായ വിശ്വാസം. പഞ്ചായത്തുകൾ രാജ്യത്തിനു് ഗുണകരമായി പലതും പ്രവൃത്തിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നും പ്രവൃത്തിക്കുന്നുണ്ടെന്നും അങ്ങിനെ പ്രവൃത്തിക്കാനുള്ള സാദ്ധ്യതകൾ ഒക്കുമുണ്ടെന്നും പറയുന്നതിൽ ഞാൻ അഭിപ്രായ വ്യത്യാസം പറയുകയാണെന്നു് നിങ്ങൾ തെറ്റിദ്ധരിക്കരുതു". പക്ഷെ പഞ്ചായത്തുകളിൽ നിക്ഷിപ്തമായിരിക്കുന്ന അധികാരങ്ങൾ ജനങ്ങൾക്കു ഉപകാരപ്രദമായ രീതിയിൽ ഉപയോഗിക്കാൻ ഇനിയും കുറെക്കാലങ്ങൾകൂടി കഴിയേണ്ടിവരും. അങ്ങിനെയിരിക്കെ കൂടുതൽ അധികാരങ്ങൾ ചുമത്തുന്ന ടൌൺ കൌൺസിൽസ് ഇപ്പോൾ നിർമ്മിക്കു

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ന്നപക്ഷം അതു ആശാസ്യമായ ഒരു നയമായിരിക്കുമെന്നെ സംശയിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നു. ഈ കാരണങ്ങളാൽ ഞാൻ ഈ പ്രമേയത്തെ എതിർക്കുന്നു.

Mr. V. J. Mathai *(Planters):* Mr. President, Sir, I am very glad to find that the Hon'ble Member for Talappalli Ezhuvas has supported the opposition on grounds not specified and which he leaves it to his successors to propound. Such a method of debate is foreign to my knowledge.

(A voice: party system)

I am, therefore, so glad that I am not in any party. The very first reason alleged for the opposition to this measure is that it would be injuring the village people, since it would be imposing additional taxation upon them. The very ground raised is baseless. I would support this bill on the ground that people who enjoy greater amenities than those which the villagers get, should be taxed for those extra amenities enjoyed by them. If we take, for example, any Municipality, all those special amenities such as water supply and several other conveniences in the line of sanitation and so on, are really being paid for by them. Therefore, I should think that the institution of more town councils would be a very great benefit to the villages, since they will not be charged any more for the additional expenditure to be incurred in keeping towns like Trippunittura or Vadakkancheri clean and extra beautiful. I would ask a question, Sir, why a villager from Keecheri or from Edakkattuvayal should be made to pay for the extra amenities enjoyed by the townsfolk of Ernakulam or for that matter the townsfolk of Nemmara. Therefore, to me it appears that even the very first ground raised by the Hon'ble member for Talappilli Ezhuvas is baseless and for this very reason I support this Bill. So far as our knowledge goes, the creation of small municipalities and towns is being resorted to in highly advanced countries like England which we ought to follow in several respects such as in the matter of sanitation of crowded areas. Therefore, it appears to me to be a very salutary principle that additional areas should be taken up and left in the charge of the people of such areas, discretion being left to them to raise extra money for keeping those areas neat and healthy. For these reasons and for other reasons which will be advanced later on *(laughter)* I support this Bill.

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* Sir, I rise to oppose this Bill. With due deference to the Hon'ble Minister I say that the very fundamental principle underlying this Bill is wrong. The Bill proposes to convert into towns regions which are inhabited

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by 5000 people or more. If that is to be the case, if a region that consists of 5000 people should be converted into a town, in many cases such a region may not have all those elements which make the area a real town. It looks like the Government saying "Let that village be a town" and at once that village becomes a town. As my hon'ble friend Mr. Viswambharan said, it is something like the Biblical fiat "Let there be light and light is made". It would be like Government trying to say, "let a man be a woman" and the result is that the man at once becomes a woman. Can we expect a man to become a woman or the woman to be a man! So, creation of a village into a town by a mere fiat of the Government is certainly objectionable.

It is also to be regretted that there is some indefiniteness in that provision. At least if we look to the Village Panchayat Act, there is some definiteness in the area to be selected. I am referring to the Village Panchayat Act, section 5 of which says "The Government may, from time to time, by notification in the Government Gazette, establish a Village Panchayat for any one village or part of a village or group of villages and may at any time and in like manner modify or cancel such notification." The point I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Members is "*for any one village or part of a village or group of villages*" so says the Panchayat Act. There is some definiteness there about the area to be selected. Now, Sir, compare this with the corresponding provision in the new Bill. It says.—"Government may by notification declare their intention to constitute as a town any village, hamlet, bazaar, station or other specified local area or any group of the same in the immediate neighbourhood of one another with the population of not less than 5000." It may be a village, of course, there is some definiteness about it. But when we go to the other categories, like a hamlet, a bazaar, a station or other specified local area or any group of the same in the immediate neighbourhood and so on, certainly there is too great an extent of indefiniteness there. One peculiarity of this is, in the case of a Village Panchayat, a definite area is selected to constitute a Panchayat. Here, any area, provided there is 5000 population.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar *(Nellayi):* Specified area.

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* What about hamlet, bazaar, station, etc.? What is the basis of your specification? That basis of specification will be, you must have 5000 people. There is no territorial boundaries specified as in the case of Panchayats.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja *(Advocate-General):* Boundaries will be given by notification.

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Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* The criterion is only 5000 people. It may be a desert area.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja *(Advocate-General):* A desert area may not have 5000 people.

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* You must populate it.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja *(Advocate-General):* Then it ceases to be a desert.

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* Even for purposes of getting 5000 people you can take a large area. The only thing is, that it should contain 5000 people. I can understand a case where in a small area, there are 5000 people or even more. Here according to the provision a large area, a sparsely populated area, a thinly populated area with 5000 people can be taken to constitute a town. Therefore, Sir, in the first fundamental thing in the Bill contained in section 3 there is such an extent of indefiniteness which does not justify the introduction of the Bill on that basis. Then, after all there is always the difference between a town and a village. It is not by a legislative measure that a village should be made a town. If that is the case, if this rule of 5000 people is applied, I think in course of time our small State will bristle with towns and towns. For example a small place like Azhikkal inhabited by the poor people of the Kudumi community which contains 5000 people or more can be converted into a town. If we go on at this rate, Sir, there may come a time when many areas which ought to remain as rural areas will be converted into towns. It will be misnomer to term them as towns, and if you read the papers you will see that such a small State of ours is full of towns.

Then the purpose for which this is introduced will entail taxation. In many of these small areas the people are very poor and if these small areas are to be converted into towns what would happen is these poor people will have to pay over and above the revenue kists several other taxes. It seems to me that in course of time the burden that is now resting on the shoulders of the Government will be shifted on to the shoulders of these people to manage their own affairs. That is the danger which I foresee in this. For these reasons, Sir, I think that the fundamental basis of the Bill is wrong. I do not go into the details of the Bill. The principle is wrong and my humble submission is that it is not by a legislative process that areas should be converted into towns and Town Councils must be established. It may be conceded that there are developed areas. The Hon'ble Minister yesterday cited the case of Kunnamkulam and such other places which might require town councils or

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Municipalities. But as an hon'ble member pointed out yesterday there is already provision in the Municipal Act by which minor Municipalities can be established in such developed areas. Is it necessary then for the sake of such places that we should make a general piece of legislation with provision to establish Town Councils all over the State? I say it is unnecessary. It is not only unnecessary but also injurious because it entails taxation. Why should these poor people be taxed? On this point there may be difference of opinion. There may be some of you who would say that people in these areas should be taxed and that they should be given the power of taxation.

Mr. V. J. Mathai *(Planters):* On a point of information, Sir, may I know whether the power of taxation is not vested in the Councils themselves?

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* Yes. Many powers are vested in the Council. But are we to exercise all those powers indiscriminately?

Mr. V. J. Mathai *(Planters):* Why can't they reduce the taxation if the taxes are felt heavily?

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* I am equally a representative of the people and I am sure that they do not wish to be taxed. But if there are people who can pay, let them demand these institutions.

Mr. A. P. Menon *(Chittur-Tattamangalam):* How can you eat the cake without getting it? You want self-government at one time, but you don't want to be taxed.

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* I am not against self-Government. In fact, I am a Champion of self-Government. Is this the idea of self-government? Self-governing institutions are to be established in places where circumstances permit and where people have reached a certain stage of their development.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* So, we have not reached that stage?

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* I am not for a cake. But let every man get an *iddaly* for himself. Men who do not get *iddalies* may not wish for a cake. What I say is that there are developed places where the so-called self-governing institutions can be established. There are centres like Kunnamkulam and Trippunittura for example, I admit, why should you not have a Municipality at Kunnamkulam? There is provision for that in the Municipal Act itself. But a piece of legislation of this kind which provides for town councils which are a sort of pigmy municipalities

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for each and every place like that is an unnecessary thing, and not only unnecessary, I say it would be positively injurious to the bulk of the people. Secondly, it will shift the burden which is now resting upon the shoulders of Government to the poor people who reside in these rural areas. A time may come when there will be several centres very well developed where towns may rise.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar *(Nellayi):* When?

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* To say when, I am not a prophet. When such a time comes and when there is economic development and other factors favourable to constitute them into towns, then you establish municipalities there. But let not this kind of artificial municipalities be imposed upon the people. There may be other minor drawbacks. When a Bill like this is passed by this House what I foresee is, that Government will not find very many places where all these factors have developed. Only when we are satisfied that the people have come up to that stage of development, then only we should establish town councils. With all due deference to Government, let me submit that it might happen that when there is a possibility of town councils being established in the State there will come into existence factors that will demand from Government town councils in too many places. We have certain experience of what is happening in the Panchayat elections. In many centres even if the people may not have reached that development to deserve a town council is it not possible that some sort of pigmy politicians will raise a sort of popular demand and a sort of misrepresentation on behalf of the people will be put forward? They will tell the people easily, "you will get this privilege and that privilege, you will get this amenity, and that amenity, why not we have a town council"? They will hold meetings after meetings and demand after demand will be made for town councils in the shape of resolutions. I am speaking practical politics. These pigmy politicians will arise and will mislead the people.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* As we are doing here as big politicians.

Mr. L. M. Pylee *(Latin Christians-Ernakulam):* If my hon'ble friend thinks that he is an elephant politician, I have no objection. If that is the case, other politicians may be considered to be pigmies.

I do not mean to say that in developed areas where people are really educated and enlightened, you should not have self-governing institutions. When such a state of development is reached in any area, you may establish municipalities or self-governing institutions even without demand from the people. For that purpose we have already

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a piece of legislation on the statute book. There is ample provision in the existing Municipal Act itself for that purpose. The Hon'ble Minister said, for Kunnamkulam we should have a town council and many Kunnamkulams might arise in Cochin State. But let me submit that these Kunnamkulams can be provided for by the provision pointed by the hon'ble member for Kunnamkulam itself.

One point that was raised here in this House seems to be that we should have a compact legislation covering the whole State. I am not impressed by that argument. A difficulty was pointed out. Each time an area is to be constituted a minor Municipality a notification is necessary, electoral rolls have to be prepared and so on. But these difficulties exist here also, because from time to time as contemplated here, Government have to issue notifications saying that a particular area, a village, a hamlet, a bazaar and such other thing is a town. I find greater difficulties here. These are some of the main objections. I oppose the Bill in toto, because the principle involved is objectionable, the very fundamental of the Bill is objectionable, and it will lead to a greater amount of hardship on the people for the time being in the near future. When developments take place in these areas, then introduce self-governing institutions there. But first of all you must be convinced of the necessity. Therefore, this piece of legislation, I should think, is both unnecessary and injurious. On these grounds, Sir, I regret that I have to oppose the Bill.

Mr. C. V. Iyyu *(Kunnamkulam):* I would like to know whether this Bill is a party Bill of the Cochin Congress?

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* No. It is a Government Bill.

Mr. President: The Hon'ble Minister represents the Government and he is in charge of this Bill as any other member of Government.

Mr. T. K. Nayar *(Pazhayannur):* But he represents the transferred departments alone.

Mr. President: The Bills brought by the Minister are Bills brought on behalf of the Government. Whether he has got the sanction of his party or not, we are not concerned with it. So far as this House is concerned this is a Bill which has been brought by the Minister on behalf of Government.

Mr. T. K. Nayar *(Pazhayannur):* Is it apart from his party?

Mr. President: Certainly. He is not there to discharge his duties as the leader of his party.

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Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* We shall take care of ourselves and I am sure we are capable of looking after ourselves.

Mr. C. V. Iyyu *(Kunnamkulam):* We want to know whether the party is going to support this or not.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* If the hon'ble members are incapable to gather the attitude of the party after the speeches I can only sympathise with them.

Mr. C. V. Iyyu *(Kunnamkulam):* The Minister said that there was difference of opinion in his own party.

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* What I said was, that this Bill should not be opposed as a party measure. I appealed to the Members of this Council to use their discretion irrespective of the fact that they belong to a particular party. I threw the onus and responsibility of accepting or rejecting this measure to the House because this Bill was brought under the direction and instruction of this House, and I stated that I will decide regarding the further stages of the Bill after ascertaining their views. I threw the responsibility upon this House.

Mr. President: Whatever may be the support the Minister has in a particular measure so far as this House and the public are concerned the Minister is a part of the Government of Cochin and the Minister brings measures here on behalf of the Government of Cochin. What he will do if his party opposes it, is a matter with which we are not concerned. So far as this House is concerned it is a measure brought forward by the Government. As I understood the Minister, he made an appeal to the House not to simply consider this measure from a partisan spirit.

*__Mr. P. Govinda Menon__ *(Mulakunnathukavu):* As a member hailing from a village which is extremely rural and as a member representing a constituency which is also rural, on behalf of the rural population of this country I have very great pleasure to support this Bill. The two hon'ble members who opposed this Bill sought to create a confusion with regard to the scope of the Bill. If that was done intentionally, if it was their object to create confusion it does not do much credit. If it was unintentional it does not throw much credit on themselves. It was sought to be made out that by this Bill the Government sought to create towns where towns did not exist and like the biblical proverb "let there be light and there was light" the Government was going to say "let there be towns and there will be towns". The object of this Bill as can be gathered

*Speech not corrected by the hon'ble member.

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from the statement of objects and reasons and the general scheme of the Bill is to convert areas which are rural towns and which are now passing in the name of villages into towns as contemplated in the Bill. The word *towns* in this Bill has a special significance. There are towns and towns. But here the word *towns* has a particular significance, *viz.*, a place with a population of more than 5,000 and although under clause 3 there is no definition as to the area for which this should be created, I am sure the intention is to conceive of a compact area to be constituted into Town Council. The Hon'ble Member Mr. Pylee did not want to go into the details but he actually went into the details when he said that the area has not been specified. That will be a matter to be considered by the Select Committee. I am sure some restriction regarding the area will be necessary. Otherwise it will be open to the criticism levelled by my hon'ble friend that any area consisting of more than 10 miles may be constituted into a Town Council. The object can very easily be gathered from the provisions of the Bill and also from the statement of objects and reasons. A compact area with 5,000 people may be constituted into a Town Council, the area now called villages but which are towns will be called *towns* for the purposes of this Bill.

Exactly two years back in the Vrischigam Session of the Council, a Bill was introduced by the Government to give powers of taxation to the Village Panchayats in our State. It was a Bill to amend the provisions of the Panchayat Act and one clause of that Bill sought to give powers of local taxation for Panchayats. That Bill was opposed by several members of this Council not on the ground that the Panchayats should not be given the powers of taxation and not on the ground that there was no reason to grant these powers, but on the specific ground that the Village Panchayat Act as now worked by the Department does not give large powers. Although the Village Panchayat Act under sections 11 and 12, seeks to give extensive powers to the Village Panchayat, Government through the Panchayat Department, by its rules and notifications have taken the powers from the Panchayats and therefore by assisting the Panchayats by giving them powers of taxation we will really be assisting the Panchayat Department to swell its general revenues. That was the ground on which several members opposed that Bill. Even in 1113 members of this House were conscious that a time has reached when in order to give larger amenities to the people of the State, some power of local taxation should be given to the people. Since that power was sought to be given to the Village Panchayat and since the Village Panchayat was being worked by a capricious executive, the Bill was opposed. That was the argument of every leading member advanced in this House to oppose that Bill. Now has come before this House

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a measure which is quite different from the one which was introduced two years back. Town Councils are to be constituted in areas which are really urban. As was stated by my friend Mr. Viswambharan, these are not intended to be applicable to areas which are rural areas or places where there are only poor people.

Mr. K. R. Viswambharan *(Ezhuvas-Talappalli):* Where do you make the distinction?

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* It is intended to apply to areas which are really urban because compact areas containing more than 5,000 people will be urban areas. The object of the Bill is to give powers of taxation and to give power to the Government to open Town Councils for places which are really urban areas and if there are any provisions in this Bill which will militate against this I say it is up to the House by bringing proper amendments to see that the objectionable features are removed.

Now, Sir, we are clamouring more and more for self-government and it is clear that the true step to real self-government must be through local self-government, and if Town Councils with a large majority of elected members—personally I think the ratio fixed for elected and nominated members is unsatisfactory—and I will be bringing an amendment to see that the elected element should be given a higher ratio—with powers of self-determination are constituted with powers of running the department transferred over to them by the Government, if such Councils are constituted, I am sure no member of this Council will be bold enough to deny that it is an act of local self-government. Consistently with the attitude taken up by this House I am sure, members of this House, in order to advance the cause which each and everyone desires, will agree to some sort of local taxation. In order to understand the real implications of the Bill upon the rural population, I will request my hon'ble friend to consider a certain example. There are now five or six municipalities. Nobody will object if an amendment is brought forward giving full powers of taxation to the municipality, because the large majority of the population represent rural population. They will not oppose because they are not interested in passing any measure which will give full powers of taxation to urban areas in order that the general revenues of the State may not be diverted for these areas. Suppose one of the municipalities is removed, say Irinjalakkuda or Chittur. If that municipality is abolished, the consequence will be more, out of the general revenues of the State will have to be spent in that urban area in order to promote the interest of that urban area. If two and two makes four, it follows that this will have to be spent out of the general revenues. Is it in the real interests of the

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rural population? Conversely if more of the urban areas are constituted into Town Councils, the money now spent by the departments will be available in a greater quantity for the works of utility in the really rural area. *(Hear, hear).* Viewed from this standpoint I am sure none of the members of this House who have got the real interest of the rural population in their heart will be interested in opposing this measure. It is very easy to oppose a measure which seeks to give powers of taxation either to the Government or local bodies and it is equally easy to get public applause. But is that the attitude which a member of the Council should take, I ask. The real objective underlying the Bill being to constitute Town Councils for areas which are really urban, I am sure the rural population is not at all interested in seeing that this Bill is opposed.

I wish to bring to the attention of the House another aspect. There are several kinds of taxation contemplated by this Bill. I am sure many of these taxes are being collected by the Public Health Department. The central government is now collecting several taxes contemplated by this Bill. If the real result of the Bill will be to give that right of collection to the local people they will have the right of spending it also. It is a real transfer of power from the Government to the people. Viewed from any point, I am sure, the immediate result would be to allow the Government especially the Minister to spend the money given to his control, the money transferred to him, to be spent in really rural areas and the Bill is really asking the urban people to effect some amount of local taxation in order to meet their local requirements. If the Bill is viewed from this point, I think, there will be no objection. It is very easy to attribute motives and suppose things which are not in the Bill. The hon'ble members who were opposing the Bill were stating that the people are poor, that the people are over-taxed and that the people will be affected by the introduction of this measure. The question is whether the Bill is intended to affect that class of people. It is easy to say that the village people are suffering from economic depression. But is this Bill going to affect them? This Bill is not going to convert villages into towns. The word *town* is used in a technical sense. I think the hon'ble members will bestow their attention on this matter, and if there are defects which would cause hardship to the people, it is up to the House to effect proper amendments and see that we have got a proper legislation. With these few words, I request the House to give their unanimous support to the Bill.

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Mr. A. B. Salem *(Mattancheri):* Sir, I rise to support this Bill, firstly because this is the first Bill that is brought by a responsible Minister in this House. We have been fighting here for the introduction of responsible government and we now have a little responsibility infused into the government, that responsible Minister for the first time is bringing in a measure like this for the development of the area that has been entrusted to his care. I have great pleasure to support a measure like this, because responsibility does not mean playing to the galleries for applause, but doing something substantial, whatever may be the risks. This Bill, to my mind, is certainly nothing more than an enabling measure, *(hear, hear)*, to be applied in the circumstances that will arise, and it has been stated in the objects of the Bill that if there is an area that is developed and which ought to be brought within the scope of this Bill, then the responsible Government will take the responsibility of declaring that area into a town. *(Hear, hear)*. If the House is of opinion that the Minister in charge of the Department is mis-applying the powers that we now give him, it will be open to the House to control that Minister and if he is doing wrong we have an adequate remedy in our hands, to pull the Minister out. *(Hear, hear)*. What is the danger that is lurking in this Bill? After all it is only for the purpose of diverting more funds which are necessary for undeveloped areas and to make people pay for it. Nothing more or nothing less is aimed by this Bill. The populous villages should find the money for their needs. What is the necessity of Kunnamkulam, where there is a large number of rich people, asking the Government from time to time even for a road within their own village? I know, there for a bell mouth how much money was demanded for acquisition. Such a thing is unnecessary. Here you have got a measure which gives you the right to tax, not in the manner of the Municipal Act, but in a different manner. There is power in the Government under the Cochin Municipal Act to declare any area when they think fit to be a Municipality, in which case you have the danger of the rules and notifications of the Cochin Municipal Act attaching to the declaration. Here you have got a Bill more or less on the lines of the Municipal Act but with the absolute right in the House to delete any of the provisions that are not wanted for these minor Town Councils. You can also revise the rules as you think fit. I have been informed that this Bill will be more or less a permissive measure. I looked into the measure as it stands now. It is the same as in the Municipal Act. If there is a place to be constituted, objections have to be invited and considered, and it is left to the Government to consider these objections, if they are reasonable. Who is going to take the responsibility of considering the reason-

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ableness or otherwise of the applicability of this new measure into any area? A responsible Minister. If he does not bestow that kind of consideration that can be approved by this House, and if he only exercises the power according to his whims and fancies or hatreds and declare an area to be a town, we have an adequate remedy here. He will not be in his place. He will be unseated. A legislation should always be comprehensive. The power must be there to be utilised. If the power is misused we have a remedy. So long as the Minister was not there, the Government could do anything they liked. We could only criticise and our voice was a voice in the wilderness. But that is not the case now. If he exercises his powers not in the proper manner without adequate consideration, we have power over him. That is the point that has been missed by my friend in that block. If you can tell the Minister that you do not want it and were he to brush aside your wishes, there is an adequate remedy. There is no fear to give any power. It is the exercise of that power that is to be watched, and not the arming the Minister with the powers. I have therefore great pleasure in supporting this measure, and in arming our Minister with all the powers that he wants, wait and see what he is going to do with those powers. I would ask the Members of the State Congress to take these things into consideration.

The minimum fixed is five thousand people. The question is asked whether the area has been defined. We shall see how the Minister is going to form this area. All those things are details. Therefore, I would say that I support this on the principle of arming the Minister with powers. I have very great pleasure in supporting the Bill on which even the reserved part of the Government have bestowed their consideration and allowed the Minister to bring it as a Government measure. He said that he has convinced the reserved half.

Mr. President: The fact that the Minister has brought the Bill does not mean that he has brought it on his own responsibility. He is as much a part of the Government as the Diwan is.

Mr. A. B. Salem *(Mattancheri):* Yesterday the Minister said that the reserved half is convinced.

Mr. President : We are working a new constitution. It is therefore quite necessary that the House should understand its full implications.

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* What I said was that it was my duty to convince the reserved half as to the reasonableness of the measure and leave the rest to the House.

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Mr. President: The reserved half was convinced in this sense that this measure is indirectly vesting more powers in the Minister. One of the reasons why I agreed with the Minister to proceed with this measure is this. If we exercised the power under the Municipal Act and by simply applying the provisions of this Act we will be creating minor municipalities and the power will be with the Diwan, but if Town Councils are to be created for which the Minister is responsible, the administration should be in the hands of the Minister. When I gave my sanction to the Minister it is that aspect that I had in view. Indirectly we are extending the powers vested in the Minister under the constitution. *(Hear, hear.)*

Mr. A. B. Salem *(Mattancheri):* That is why I welcome the measure. It is a great gratification to this House to hear that the Head of the administration is prepared to give more and more powers to the Minister to be exercised. As I already submitted the Municipal Act is already there, and if the Government is convinced that a particular area like Trippunittura should come under the Municipal Act, the power is there. We have been told what the real aspect of the question is. I therefore appeal to this House that there is no danger of injury on account of taxation. Government would still give the money that they get to be distributed to the rural areas. There is no principle involved in opposing this measure. I would ask the Members of the State Congress Party to support this measure. I support the measure and I request the House to allow the Bill to be referred to a Select Committee.

The House rose for lunch at 1-5 p.m. and reassembled at 2-30 p.m. with the Hon'ble Deputy President in the Chair.

Mr. A. B. Salem *(Mattancheri):* In addition to what I have stated this morning there is an additional reason why we should support the Bill. The Town Councils consist of 10 members and a Chairman. We are selecting the Chairman and the members would be elected from the area concerned and any kind of taxation that would come within that area would be only with the express sanction of the majority, and it is to go through another deliberation by the elected Minister. Therefore we have got a double check upon the taxation. There is nothing to prevent the Government of Cochin to transfer the municipalities to the control of the Minister in which case the Minister will have sufficient power to apply the Municipal Act to any area. But in this Act we have an advantage. We are not bound by the taxation rules. We need adopt only such rules as we think necessary. The Bill can be changed. If you do not think that it is necessary to go as far as the Minister wants it to go, you

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can moye amendments. For all these reasons, I think the Bill ought to be supported.

*Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar *(Cheruthuruthi):* Sir, I do not wish to make a long speech. I shall be very brief in meeting only some of the points which I am really surprised to find were raised by some members in opposing this Bill. I was really shocked to find that such a progressive measure like this was being opposed by a party, one of the shining lights of which was advocating the formation of Town Councils and small minor municipalities all over the State. Sir, when I heard the members who opposed this Bill, I thought that the very fundamental principle which guides this Bill would be to enable the Government or rather to compel the Government to split the whole of the Cochin State into areas consisting a population of 5,000 and impose a municipality upon them. I am sure, as the Hon'ble Member for Mulakunnathukavu stated, it is only a method of confusing the issue. The Hon'ble Member for Mulaknunnathukavu has clearly stated the scope of the Bill. It is only an enabling measure. I would call it a permissive measure. Persons who will be affected by it and who have any objections to it can object to the formation or constitution of Town Councils in any particular area. It was stated by my friend Mr. Pylee that it is very difficult to understand what the exact area that will be constituted into Town Councils would be and yet the hon'ble friend was in favour of recommendation for the creation of minor municipalities under section 273 of the Municipal Act. I wish to draw the attention of the member to the same clause here and the corresponding provision in the Municipal Act for the constitution of municipalities. Clause three of this Bill is the same as section 4 of the Municipal Act with this difference, that in the Municipal Act there is no question of limitation of population. Government can constitute a Municipal Council in areas where the population is less than 5,000. That is the only difference I can think of. I would therefore submit that there is absolutely no force in that argument. As some of the members spoke in support of the motion, it is only in convenient areas where they require Town Councils for the improvement of that locality—it is only such areas that will be converted into Town Councils. Since this aspect has already been touched upon I do not wish to elaborate on that point any more.

I shall come to the next point, the point raised with regard to the bogey of taxation. Let us look at the provisions of the Act and let us see who are going to be affected. When I heard the hon'ble members speaking, I thought that the Government will be invested

* Speech not corrected by the hon'ble member.

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or the municipalities will be invested with the power of taxing all the poor in the land. Let us see what the scheme of the Act is. I wish to bring to the notice of this Council that the provision made is only to tax those people who can really afford to pay. Chapter 6 of the Bill deals with taxation and finance. It speaks of the various kinds of taxes. One is Property Tax. Certain persons who own property will be taxed, and if you go further down you will find that all those persons who own property will not be taxed. Agricultural lands will not be taxed and houses which do not get an annual rental of more than 24 rupees will not be taxed and the small houses will not be taxed. Power is also given not to tax houses whose rental is 36 rupees under section 68 of the Bill. So, only the rich people will be asked to pay some taxes. And what is the tax? The minimum is only two to five per cent and even that is not compoulsory. It will be raised only with the sanction of the members of the Council and with the approval of the Government. The next item is a tax on companies. We will see how far it will affect the poor. The third is tax on profession and other sources of income. The minimum is guaranteed. Only persons who are in receipt of an amount which is more than the stipulated amount will be taxed. Then there is a tax on carriages and animals and the tax on carts. The tax on property is divided into separate taxes such as tax for general purposes, water and drainage tax, lighting and scavenging tax. It is not all those people who are really going to be effected by this legislation. I will put it the other way. These taxes will be necessary in the interests of the Towns themselves. We know that Cochin is one of the most thickly populated places in the world and our people are still going into the towns for want of the amenities which modern towns like Madras and other places are providing for the public. They demand electric lights, water and other conveniences which major towns enjoy. How can these be provided? It is impossible to provide all these under the existing circumstances. They get congested and there is no adequate provision for sanitary arrangements and such other things under the existing Act and you find large amounts are being spent on towns like Kunnamkulam, Vadakkancheri, etc., and other places where there are persons who can afford to pay. Even in Kunnamkulam I know there are very many people who are prepared to pay, provided they are given the facilities, the facilities that are enjoyed in the other towns. Will it not be the duty of those persons to contribute for the amenities of those towns and help their poor brethren? We are going to the Panchayats and asking them to spend money. But the Department is unable to provide for any one of them. If Vadakkancheri wants electric lighting how can it expect to get it. Can the Government invest so much

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money? Is it the duty of the Government to spend so much money on Vadakkancheri, Kunnamkulam and other places? Therefore in the interests of these towns a tax is necessary and there is a large section of people who are prepared to pay tax in order that they may be enabled to enjoy the amenities of modern life. Therefore, the question of tax will not affect the people as it is supposed here. These are the only two points that I was able to hear which were raised in opposing this measure. I submit there is absolutely no force in those arguments and I hope this House will unanimously support this measure which will give the right of managing their own affairs at least in certain areas of the Cochin State.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. കെ. കുട്ടി: ഈ കൌൺസിൽ ആരംഭിച്ചകാലം മുൽക്കു പട്ടണങ്ങളേയും ഗ്രാമങ്ങളേയും മാററി നിറുത്തികൊണ്ടു് പ്രവൃത്തിക്കണമെന്ന മുറവിളി കൂട്ടുവാൻ തുടങ്ങീട്ടുള്ളതു് ഈ കൌൺസിലിന്റെ ചരിത്രം പരിശോധിച്ചതിൽനിന്നും കാണുന്നുണ്ടു്. ഗ്രാമങ്ങളിൽനിന്നും പിരിക്കുന്ന പണം പട്ടണങ്ങളിൽ ചിലവു ചെയ്യുന്നു. ഗ്രാമവാസികളുടെ കാര്യങ്ങളെപ്പററി അനേഷിക്കുന്നില്ല എന്നും മറും ഇന്നിവിടെ പല മെമ്പർമാരും ധാരാളമായി മുറവിളി കൂട്ടീട്ടുള്ളതുമാണു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ എ. ഇ. ച്ചുരമേനോൻ: എല്ലാ പട്ടണങ്ങളിലും അങ്ങിനെ ചിലവു ചെയ്യുന്നില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. കെ. കുട്ടി: ഇല്ലായിരിക്കാം. പക്ഷെ, ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട ചിറയ്ക്കൽ മെമ്പർപോലും ഈ സംഗതിയിൽ ഇവിടെ പ്രസംഗിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള വിവരം എനിക്കു തെളിയിക്കുവാൻ സാധിക്കുന്നതാണു്. ഇങ്ങിനെയുള്ള മുറവിളികളെപ്പററി ചിന്തിക്കുവാനുള്ള സന്ദർഭം ഇപ്പോൾ മാത്രമാണു് ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുള്ളതു്. എന്തുകൊണ്ടെന്നാൽ യഥാർത്ഥമായി ഗ്രാമങ്ങളെ പ്രതിനിധീകരിച്ചുകൊണ്ടു് ഇവിടെ വന്നിട്ടുള്ള മെമ്പർമാർ, പ്രത്യേകിച്ചു അവരുടെ ഒരു മന്ത്രി ഇവരെല്ലാം സമ്മേളിച്ചിരിക്കുന്ന ഈ സന്ദർഭത്തിൽ അല്ലാതെ ഇതുപോലെയുള്ള ഒരു ബിൽ പ്രായോഗികമായ നിലയിൽ കൊണ്ടുവരുവാൻ സാധിക്കയില്ലെന്നുള്ളതു തീർച്ചയാണു്. ഗ്രാമങ്ങളുടെ ആവശ്യങ്ങളെപ്പററി നൈനന്ദിനം മനസ്സിലാക്കുവാനും അവരുടെ സങ്കടങ്ങളെ പരിഹരിക്കുവാനുള്ള പരിശ്രമങ്ങളിൽ ഏർപ്പെടുവാനും സന്ദർഭം ലഭിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള എനിക്കു്, ഈ അവസരത്തിൽ ഈ വിഷയത്തെക്കുറിച്ചു രണ്ടു വാക്കു സംസാരിക്കേണ്ട ചുമതലയുണ്ടു്.

കുന്നംകുളം, നെന്മാറ, തൃപ്പൂണിത്തുറ എന്നിവപോലെയുള്ള പട്ടണങ്ങളിൽ ടൌൺ കൌൺസിലുകൾ ഏർപ്പെടുത്തണമെന്നുള്ളതാണു് ഈ ബില്ലിന്റെ പ്രധാനോദ്ദേശം. എന്നാൽ ബില്ലിന്റെ പരിധിയിൽപെടുന്ന മുറ പട്ടണങ്ങളേയും ഇതിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തുവാൻ കഴിയുന്നതാണു്. ആ സ്ഥിതിക്കു് ഇപ്പോൾ ഈ ബില്ലുകൊണ്ടു് പരിഭ്രമജനകമായ ഒരു അന്തരീക്ഷം ഇവിടെ ഉളവാകുമെന്നു വരുവാൻ യാതൊരു അവകാശവുമില്ല. ഏതെങ്കിലും വ്യവസായ കേന്ദ്രങ്ങൾ പട്ടണങ്ങളായി ഉയരുന്നതാണെങ്കിൽതന്നെയും അതു ന്യായരഹിതമായി തീരുന്നതല്ല. ധാരാളം ജനങ്ങൾ തിങ്ങിത്താമസിക്കുന്ന സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ സാനിറേഷൻ ഒരു വിധത്തിലും ഒഴിച്ചുകൂട്ടുവാൻ പാടില്ലാത്തതാണു്. സ്കാവഞ്ചിംഗ്, വാട്ടർ സപ്ലൈ, ലൈററ് മുതലായവ ജനങ്ങൾ തിങ്ങിത്താമസിക്കുന്ന പട്ടണങ്ങളിൽ ഒഴിച്ചുകൂടാൻ പാടില്ലാത്തതാണു്. ഇന്ന

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ത്തെ ഗവൺമെന്റിന്റെ സാമ്പത്തിക നില വെച്ചുനോക്കുമ്പോൾ ഇപ്പോൾ അനുവദിച്ചുവരുന്നതിൽ കവിഞ്ഞ സംഖ്യ ഗ്രാമങ്ങൾക്കു കൊടുക്കുവാൻ സാധിക്കയില്ലെന്നുകാണാവുന്നതാണ്. ഇന്നു അനുവദിച്ചുവരുന്ന നിസ്സാരമായ സംഖ്യ കൊണ്ടു് ഇങ്ങിനെയുള്ള ആവശ്യങ്ങൾ നിവൃത്തിക്കുവാൻ കഴിയുന്നതല്ല. പബ്ലിക്കു് ഹെൽത്തു പഞ്ചായത്തിലേക്കു് ഭരണം നടത്തുവാനായി ഒരു ഗണ്യമായ തുക ഈ കൌൺസിൽ വർഷംതോറും പാസ്സാക്കികൊടുക്കുന്നുണ്ടു്. എന്നാൽ ബഡ്ജറ്റിൽ കാണുന്ന ആ സംഖ്യ ഗ്രാമങ്ങളുടെ ഉദ്ധാരണത്തിനും അവരുടെ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾ നിവൃത്തിക്കുന്നതിനും വേണ്ടിയാണെന്നു ഗവൺമെന്റു് പറകയും ചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ടു്. വാസ്തവത്തിൽ ഈ സംഖ്യയുടെ ഭൂരിഭാഗവും എവിടെയാണു് ചിലവു ചെയ്യുന്നതെന്നു ചിന്തിക്കേണ്ട കടമ ഈ അവസരത്തിൽ നമുക്കുണ്ടു്. ഇപ്പോൾ ടി. ഐ. സി. ആക്കുവാൻ ശ്രമിക്കുന്ന പട്ടണങ്ങളിലെ ഒരു വർഷത്തെ ഒട്ടാകെയുള്ള ചിലവുകൾ എടുത്തു പരിശോധിക്കുന്നതായാൽ കാണാം ഗ്രാമങ്ങളുടെ പേരിൽ അനുവദിക്കുന്ന സംഖ്യയുടെ ഭൂരിഭാഗവും അവിടെക്കാണു് പോകുന്നതെന്നു്. എന്നാൽ അത്രമാത്രം സംഖ്യ ഈ രാജ്യത്തിന്റെ ഏതാനും ഭാഗത്തിനു വേണ്ടി ചിലവാക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ടോ എന്നാണു് നമുക്കാലോചിക്കുവാനുള്ളതു്.

കുന്നംകുളം പട്ടണംതന്നെ ഇതിനു് ഒരു ഉദാഹരണമായിട്ടെടുക്കാം. ആ പട്ടണത്തിൽ മുപ്പതൊ നാല്പതൊ കോമേഴ്സ്യൽ വോട്ടർമാരുണ്ടു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: അതു തെറ്റാണു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. കെ. കുട്ടി: പഴഞ്ഞി, കുന്നംകുളം ഇവയെ എല്ലാം ചേർത്താണു ഞാൻ പറയുന്നതു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: എന്നാലും അത്രയുമില്ല. ഒരു ഉണ്ടോ എന്നതിനു സംശയമാണു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. കെ. കുട്ടി: ഞാൻ പറയുന്നതു എനിക്കുള്ള അറിവു വെച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണു്. ഒരു അല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഒറ ആയിരുന്നുകൊള്ളട്ടെ. രണ്ടായിരം ഉറുപ്പികയോളം ആദായത്തിനു നികുതി കൊടുക്കുന്ന അനേകം മെമ്പർമാരുള്ള ഒരു പട്ടണം അത്ര ചെറുതാണെന്നു വിചാരിക്കുവാൻ തരമില്ല. അത്രയും വ്യവസായ വ്യാപാരാഭിവൃദ്ധിയുള്ള ഒരു സ്ഥലത്തെ പട്ടണമായി പരിവർത്തനം ചെയ്യുകൂടെന്നു പറയുന്നതിന്റെ ന്യായമെന്തെന്നു എനിക്കു മനസ്സിലാകുന്നില്ല. ഇവിടെ ഹാജരായിട്ടുള്ള ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മെമ്പർമാർ എല്ലാവരും ഗ്രാമങ്ങളിൽനിന്നും തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുള്ളവരാണു്. അവരുടെ അഭ്യുദയത്തിനുവേണ്ടിയാണു് അവർ പ്രവൃത്തിക്കേണ്ടതു്. അതിനെതിരായി ചെയ്യുന്ന ഒരു പ്രവൃത്തി ഗ്രാമവാസികളുടെ പേരിൽ ചെയ്യുന്ന ഒരു വഞ്ചനയായിട്ടുകൂടി കണക്കാക്കുവാൻ ഞാൻ മടി കാണിക്കുന്നില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. എസ്സ്. പണിക്കർ: എന്താണു് വഞ്ചന എന്നു പറഞ്ഞതു്?

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. കെ. കുട്ടി: ഗ്രാമങ്ങളുടെ പണം പട്ടണങ്ങൾക്കു ചിലവാക്കുവാൻ വാദിക്കുന്നതുതന്നെ.

ഇങ്ങിനെ ഗ്രാമങ്ങൾക്കു വേണ്ടിയുള്ള സംഖ്യ പട്ടണങ്ങളിൽ ചിലവു ചെയ്യുന്നതിനോടു അനുകൂലിക്കുവാൻ എനിക്കു നിവൃത്തിയില്ല. ഇപ്പോൾ ചില പട്ടണങ്ങളിൽ പബ്ലിക്കു് ഹെൽത്തു് പഞ്ചായത്തിലേക്കു് അനുവദിച്ചി

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ട്ടുള്ള സംഖ്യകൊണ്ടു—നെന്മാറ മുതലായ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ—എല്ലുകടിക്കു ലൈറ്റും സൌകര്യവും, വാട്ടർസപ്ലൈയും നടത്തിവരുന്നുണ്ടു്. കുന്നംകുളത്തു ഗ്യാസ്ലൈറ്റുകളും ഉൾപ്പെടെ നൂറിൽ ചിലപ്പാനം വിളക്കുകളുണ്ടു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: മൂന്നു ഗ്യാസ് ലൈറ്റെ ഉള്ളു.

മിസ്റ്റർ വി. കെ. കുട്ടി: അതു ഉൾപ്പെടെയാണു് ഫ്ഠ വിളക്കുകൾ എന്നു പറഞ്ഞതു്. അതുപോലെ തുപ്പുണിത്തുറ, വടക്കാഞ്ചേരി മുതലായ സ്ഥലങ്ങളിലും ഉണ്ടു്. ഇങ്ങിനെ അനുവദിക്കുന്ന സംഖ്യയിൽനിന്നു ന്യായമായ ഒരു അവകാശം മാറ്റൊ വില്ലേജുകളും ആവശ്യപ്പെടുവാൻ അർഹതയുള്ളതാണു്. ഇനി കുന്നംകുളത്തെപ്പോലെ വ്യവസായ വ്യാപാര സങ്കേതമല്ലാത്ത ചില സ്ഥലങ്ങളെ എടുത്തു നോക്കാം. ചേരാനെല്ലൂർ വില്ലേജു് പത്തൊമ്പതു തുരുത്തുകൾ ഉള്ളതാണു്. ഓരോ വില്ലേജുകൾ രണ്ടും രണ്ടരയും മൂന്നു നാഴികയോളം അകലമുള്ളതാണു്. ഓരോ തുരുത്തും പുഴകളാൽ ചുറ്റപ്പെട്ട കിടക്കുന്നു. ഒരു ഏക്കറിൽ ഒമ്പതു വീട്ടുകാർ താമസിക്കുന്ന ഭാഗങ്ങൾ അവിടെയുണ്ടു്. കുടിക്കുവാൻ വെള്ളമൊ താമസിക്കുവാൻ സ്ഥലസൌകര്യമൊ പോലുമില്ലാത്ത സ്ഥലങ്ങളിലെ സാധുജനങ്ങളുടെ പണമല്ലെ പട്ടണങ്ങളിൽ ചിലവു ചെയ്യുവാൻ ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട ചില മെമ്പർമാർ ആവശ്യപ്പെടുന്നതെന്നു ഞാൻ ചോദിക്കുന്നു. ഏതു വിധത്തിൽ നോക്കിയാലും ഈ ബില്ലിനെ എതിർക്കുന്നവരോടു അനുകൂലിക്കുവാൻ എനിക്കു നിവൃത്തിയില്ല. ഈ കാരണങ്ങളാൽ ഞാൻ ഈ ബില്ലിനെ ഹാർദ്ദമായി അനുകൂലിക്കുകയും, ഈ ബിൽ അവതരിപ്പിച്ച ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മന്ത്രിയെ അനുമോദിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുകൊള്ളുന്നു.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: ഞാൻ എന്റെ അഭിപ്രായം പറയുവാൻ അവസാനത്തേക്കു നീട്ടിവെച്ചതു് കുന്നംകുളത്തെപ്പറ്റി പറയുവാനുള്ളതെല്ലാം കേട്ടുകഴിയട്ടെ എന്നു വിചാരിച്ചാണു്. ഈ സഭയിലെ അംഗങ്ങളുടെയിടയിൽ കുന്നംകുളത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളം ഒരു വലിയ തെറ്റിദ്ധാരണ ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ടു്. കുന്നംകുളത്തു വലിയ ധനികന്മാരും കച്ചവടക്കാരും ഉണ്ടെന്നു സമ്മതിക്കാമെങ്കിലും തൃശ്ശിവപേരൂരിൽ കച്ചവടം തുടങ്ങുന്നതിനു മുമ്പാണു് കുന്നംകുളത്തു കച്ചവടം നടന്നിരുന്നതു്. ശങ്കരവാര്യർ ദിവാൻജിയായിരുന്നകാലത്താണു് കൊക്കാലെ തോടു് ഉണ്ടാക്കി തൃശ്ശിവപേരൂരിലെ കച്ചവടം അഭിവൃദ്ധിപ്പെടുത്തുകയുണ്ടായിട്ടുള്ളതു്. മലയാളവർഷം ൯൭൫-നോ, ൯൭൬-നോ മുമ്പു് തൃശ്ശിവപേരൂർ കുന്നോളത്തിൽ പറയത്തക്ക കച്ചവടമൊന്നും ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ല. കൊച്ചി മഹാരാജാവു തിരുമനസ്സിലെ അധികാരം നിലനിറുത്തുന്നതിനു തൃശ്ശിവപേരൂരിൽ കുസ്ത്യാനികൾ ഉണ്ടായിവരണമെന്നു കരുതി ശക്തൻ തമ്പുരാൻ തിരുമനസ്സുകൊണ്ടു് അവർക്കു് ഒരു പള്ളിയും കുന്നോളവും ഉണ്ടാക്കിക്കൊടുത്തു. അന്നുമുതല്ക്കാണു് തൃശ്ശിവപേരൂർ അഭിവൃദ്ധിപ്പെടുവാനും കുന്നംകുളം ക്ഷയിക്കുവാനും ആരംഭിച്ചതു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ: അന്നു നായന്മാർക്കു് അവിടെ കച്ചവടം ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നില്ലെ?

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: നായരങ്ങാടി എന്ന പേർ ആ അങ്ങാടിക്കുണ്ടു്. നായന്മാരുടെ കച്ചവടം ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നിരിക്കണം. ഇപ്പോൾ തൃശ്ശിവപേരൂരിനെ ആശ്രയിച്ചാണു് കുന്നംകുളം കഴിയേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നതു്. കുന്നംകുളത്തു പണക്കാരുണ്ടു്. മൂന്നോ നാലോ ആളുകളുടെ അടുക്കൽ എല്ലാ പണവും പോയി കൂടിയിരിക്കുകയാണു്. അധികമാളുകളും വളരെ സാധുക്കളും

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ളരിലുമാരുമാണ്. ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മെമ്പർ കുന്നംകുളത്തുള്ളവർ നികുതി കൊടുക്കുവാൻ തയ്യാറുള്ളവരാണ് എന്നിവിടെ പറയുകയുണ്ടായി. മുനിസിപ്പൽ ചെയർമാനെന്നുള്ള നിലയിൽ അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു് കുന്നംകുളത്തുകാരനായ ഒരു മാന്യനുമായി ഇടപെടുവാൻ കാരണമുണ്ടായിരിക്കും. എല്ലാവരും അതുപോലെ ധനികന്മാരായിരുന്നെങ്കിൽ വിരോധമില്ലായിരുന്നു. ഇതിനു് മുമ്പു് മൂന്നോ നാലോ പ്രാവശ്യം കുന്നംകുളത്തു മുനിസിപ്പാലിറ്റി ഉണ്ടാക്കുന്നതു കായ്ത്തെപ്പറ്റി ഗവൺമെൻറു് ആലോചിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതാണ്. എന്നാൽ ജനങ്ങളെല്ലാം ഐകകണ്ഠ്യേന അതിനെ എതിർക്കുകയാണു ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളതു്. അവിടത്തെ സവർണ്ണഹിന്ദുക്കൾ ഒരു ചെറിയ ന്യൂനപക്ഷമാണ്. അവരെല്ലാവരും അവിടെ മുനിസിപ്പാലിറ്റിയുണ്ടാക്കുന്ന സംഗതിക്കു് എതിരാണ്. ഇതു വളരെ സത്യമായിട്ടുള്ള ഒരു കായ്വുമാണ്. ഹിന്ദുക്കളല്ലാത്തവർ പുതിയ നികുതിയെ ഭയന്നു അവരും എതിരാണ്. ഈ കാരണങ്ങളാൽ ഗവൺമെൻറു് അവിടെ മുനിസിപ്പാലിറ്റി വേണ്ടെന്നു വെക്കുകയാണു് ചെയ്തതു്. ഏഴെട്ടു കൊല്ലം മുമ്പു വരെ ഗവൺമെൻറിൽ നിന്നും കുന്നംകുളത്തേക്കു വേണ്ടി കുറെ പണം ചിലവു ചെയ്തിട്ടുണ്ടു്. പക്ഷെ കഴിഞ്ഞ അഞ്ചാറു കൊല്ലത്തോളമായി പറയത്തക്ക യാതൊരു ചിലവും ചെയ്യാറില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ: മെമ്പർ ഈ ബില്ലിനെപ്പറ്റി സംസാരിക്കുന്നുവോ, കുന്നംകുളത്തെ പറ്റി സംസാരിക്കുന്നുവോ?

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: അഞ്ചാറു കൊല്ലമായിട്ടു് അവിടങ്ങളിൽ പബ്ലിക്കു് ഹെൽത്തു് ഡിപ്പാർട്ടുമെണ്ടിൽ നിന്നും പുതുതായി റോഡുണ്ടാക്കുവാനോ, ഇപ്പോൾ ഉള്ളവയിൽ നന്നാക്കേണ്ട റോഡുകൾ നന്നാക്കുവാനോ പണം അനുവദിക്കാറില്ല. ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മന്ത്രി അടുത്ത ഒരു മൂന്നു കൊല്ലത്തെ കണക്കെടുത്തിട്ടു് കുന്നംകുളവുമായി സംബന്ധിച്ചു് ഉള്ള പണച്ചിലവിൻറെ കായ്ത്തിൽ ഈ സഭക്കുണ്ടായിട്ടുള്ള തെറ്റിദ്ധാരണയെ നീക്കിയാൽ കൊള്ളാം. കുന്നംകുളത്തു് മുനിസിപ്പാലിറ്റി ഏർപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിനെപ്പറ്റി മുമ്പുണ്ടായിരുന്ന അഭിപ്രായത്തിനു് ഇപ്പോൾ ചില വ്യതിയാനങ്ങൾ വന്നിട്ടുണ്ടു്. ഇരിങ്ങാലക്കുടയാണു് അതിനു കാരണം. ഇരിങ്ങാലക്കുടക്കാർക്കു ഷൺമുഖം കനാൽ കിട്ടി. അതുപോലൊന്നു കിട്ടുവാൻ ഞങ്ങൾ ഫർ കൊല്ലത്തോളമായി പ്രക്ഷോഭണം ചെയ്തുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നു. അതിലേക്കു് ഗവൺമെൻറു് ആവുന്നതും ശ്രമിക്കുന്നുണ്ടു്. അതുണ്ടാക്കുന്നപക്ഷം ഗവൺമെൻറു് ചിലവു് ചെയ്യുന്ന സംഖ്യക്കു് ന്യായമായ ഒരു വലിശ കിട്ടുന്നതിനു ഉത്തരവാദപ്പെടുവാൻ മുനിസിപ്പാലിറ്റി കൊണ്ടല്ലാതെ മറ്റൊരു സ്ഥാപനം കൊണ്ടും മാർഗ്ഗമില്ല. വാണിജ്യ നിയോജകമണ്ഡലത്തിലെ സമ്മതിദായക പട്ടികയെപ്പറ്റിയ ഓമ്മ ശരിയല്ല. പഴഞ്ഞി കുന്നംകുളം പട്ടണത്തിൽ പെട്ടതല്ല. അവിടത്തെന്നെ ഏഴു വോട്ടർമാർ ഉണ്ടു്. അതും കൂടി നോക്കിയാൽ പതിനൊന്നു വോട്ടർമാരേ വാണിജ്യമണ്ഡലത്തിലുള്ളവരായി കുന്നംകുളത്തുള്ളൂ.

എന്നാൽ ഈ ബില്ലിനെ പൊതുവെ ആലോചിച്ചുനോക്കുന്ന പക്ഷം പുതിയ നികുതി സൃഷ്ടിക്കുന്ന ഒരു ഏർപ്പാടെന്നല്ലാതെ മറ്റൊന്നും പറയാനില്ല. നികുതി ചുമത്തേണ്ട ആവശ്യം നേരിടുമ്പോൾ സാധുക്കളുടെ കായ്ത്തിൽ നികുതി ചുമത്തുവാനല്ല നോക്കേണ്ടതു്. ഗവൺമെൻറിനു് ഈ വക പ്രയാസങ്ങളൊന്നും വരാതിരിക്കുവാനാണു് ഞാൻ മുമ്പു് ഇവിടെ ഇൻകംടാക്സു് ബിൽ കൊണ്ടുവന്നതു്. അതിനെ ഗവൺമെൻറു് എതിർക്കുകയുണ്ടായി. ബ

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ഹ്മാനപ്പെട്ട ദിവാൻജിയവർകൾ എത്ര പണം വേണമെങ്കിലും തരുവാൻ തയ്യാറാണെന്ന സമ്മതിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതാണ്. മാതൃകാപഞ്ചായത്തുകൾക്ക് അനുവദിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള പണം ഈ കൊല്ലത്തിൽ വ്യഞ്ചികം ൨൦-ാംനു യായിട്ടും ചിലവ് ചെയ്തിട്ടില്ല. അതു് എങ്ങിനെ ചിലവഴിക്കണമെന്നുപോലും തീർച്ചയാക്കീട്ടു മില്ല.

പൊതുവെ പറയുകയാണെങ്കിൽ ജനാധിപത്യഭരണത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചു് വളരെ ആശാപരമായിട്ടുള്ള ഒരു നിലയാണ് ഞാൻ ഇപ്പോഴും വിചാരിച്ചു കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്നതു്. എന്നാൽ ഇൻഡ്യയിൽ മഹാന്മാരായ ആളുകൾ ഇൻഡ്യക്കു് ജനാധിപത്യഭരണം ചേരുന്നതല്ലെന്നു പറഞ്ഞുതുടങ്ങീട്ടുണ്ടു്. അതു കൊണ്ടു് ഇവിടത്തെ ജനാധിപത്യഭരണം വില്ലേജുകൾക്കു കൂടുതൽ കുഴപ്പത്തിനിടവരുത്തുകയില്ലേ എന്നു ഞാൻ സംശയിക്കുന്നു. കൊച്ചി രാജ്യത്തിൽ അയ്യായിരത്തിൽ കൂടുതൽ ജനസംഖ്യയുള്ള വില്ലേജുകളെ പട്ടണങ്ങളാക്കുവാൻ സാധിക്കുമെന്നുള്ള വ്യവസ്ഥ ഈ ബില്ലിൽ ചേർത്തിട്ടുണ്ടു്. ആ വ്യവസ്ഥ അനുസരിക്കുന്ന പക്ഷം കൊച്ചികണയന്നൂർ താലൂക്കിൽ നൂറ്റെ വില്ലേജുകൾ ഉള്ളതിൽ ഏഴു വില്ലേജുകളിൽ അയ്യായിരത്തിലധികം ജനസംഖ്യയുള്ളതായി വില്ലേജ് സ്റ്റാറ്റിസ്റ്റിക്സിൽ നിന്നും എനിക്കു് മനസ്സിലാക്കുവാൻ സാധിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടു്. കൊച്ചികണയന്നൂർ താലൂക്കിൽ ആകെയുള്ള നൂറ്റെ വില്ലേജുകളിൽ ഏഴു വില്ലേജുകളിൽ ൪,൦൦൦ത്തിലധികം ജനങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടു്. ഈ താലൂക്കിൽ തന്നെ ൩,൪൦൦ റിൽ പരം ജനങ്ങളുള്ള പത്തു വില്ലേജുകളുണ്ടു്. കൊടുങ്ങല്ലൂർ താലൂക്കിൽ ആകെയുള്ള ൪ വില്ലേജുകളിൽ രണ്ടു വില്ലേജുകളിൽ ൪,൦൦൦ത്തിലധികവും ഒരുവില്ലേജിൽ൩,൪൦൦-ൽ അധികവും ജനങ്ങളുണ്ടു്. തൃശ്ശിവപേരൂരിൽ ആകെയുള്ള ൭൫ വില്ലേജുകളിൽ നാലു വില്ലേജുകളിൽ ൪,൦൦൦-ൽ അധികവും ൩൪ വില്ലേജുകളിൽ ൩,൪൦൦ ജനസംഖ്യയും ഉണ്ടു്. മുകുന്ദപുരത്തു ആകെയുള്ള നൂറു വില്ലേജുകളിൽ ൪,൦൦൦ത്തിലധികം ജനസംഖ്യയുള്ള ൧൫ വില്ലേജുകളും ൩,൪൦൦ ലധികം ജനങ്ങളുള്ള നാല് വില്ലേജുകളും ഉണ്ടു്. തലപ്പിള്ളി താലൂക്കിൽ നാല്പ വില്ലേജുകളിൽ ൩,൪൦൦ ലധികവും, നാല വില്ലേജുകളിൽ ൪,൦൦൦ത്തിലധികവും ജനസംഖ്യയുണ്ടു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. എസ്സ്. പണിക്കർ: കുന്നംകുളത്തുള്ള ജനസംഖ്യ ഫസ്റ്റ്-ലെ കാനേഷുമാരി കണക്കുപ്രകാരം എത്രയാണ്?

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: ൧൯,൭൦൦-ൽ അല്പം കൂടി അധികം.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. എസ്സ്. പണിക്കർ: സ്റ്റാറ്റിസ്റ്റിക്സ്പ്രകാരം ൭൫ പേർ എന്നാണ് കാണുന്നതു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: ഫസ്റ്റ്-ലെ കാനേഷുമാരിപ്രകാരം കുന്നംകുളത്തെ ഇപ്പോഴത്തെ ജനസംഖ്യ ൧൪,൦൦൦ത്തിലധികം ഉണ്ടു്. പക്ഷെ അന്നും ഇന്നും കുന്നംകുളം റവന്യൂ വില്ലേജ് മുഴുവനും പട്ടണാതൃത്തിക്കുള്ളിൽ ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തീട്ടില്ല. കുന്നംകുളത്തിന്റെ പടിഞ്ഞാറുള്ള പുഞ്ചപ്പാടത്തുള്ള ഒരു തുരുത്തു ഇപ്പോഴും പട്ടണത്തിന്റെ പുറത്താണ്. ആ തുരുത്തിൽ ഒരു മുസ്ലീം വീടുണ്ടു്. അതാണ് ൭൫ പേർ എന്നു പറയുന്നതു്. ഈ നിലയിൽ നോക്കുമ്പോൾ അവിടെ മുനിസിപ്പാലിറ്റിയില്ലാതെ ടൌൺകൌൺസിൽ ഏർപ്പെടുത്തുവാൻ തരമില്ല. കഴിഞ്ഞ കാനേഷുമാരിക്കു് ശേഷം കുന്നംകുളം പട്ടണാതൃ

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ത്തിക്കുള്ളിലേക്കു് അതിന്റെ ചുറ്റുമുള്ള റവന്യൂ വില്ലേജുകളിൽ നിന്നും കുറെ ശേഖരിച്ചുകൂട്ടി ചെത്തിട്ടുണ്ടു്. ഹെൽത്തു് ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെൻറതന്നെ കുന്നംകുളത്തുള്ള ആരോഗ്യവും അവിടത്തെ ചില ഇടവഴികളെ സംബന്ധിച്ചും ഭേദം നടത്തുന്നതിൽ അവിടെയുള്ളവർക്കു് യാതൊരു തടസ്ഥവുമില്ല. എന്നാൽ ഈ ബില്ലിനെ സംബന്ധിച്ചിടത്തോളമുള്ള സംഗതിയിൽ അവിടത്തുകാർക്കു് പ്രതിഷേധമാണുള്ളതു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. അയ്യപ്പൻ: ശ്രമവും പ്രതിഷേധവും കൂടി ഒരു കാര്യത്തിൽ ഉണ്ടാകുന്നതു് എങ്ങിനെയാണു്?

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: തോട്ടണ്ടായിക്കിട്ടേണ്ട കാര്യത്തിൽ ശ്രമം, മുനിസിപ്പാലിറ്റിയുണ്ടാക്കുന്നതിൽ പ്രതിഷേധം.

മിസ്റ്റർ പി. ഗോവിന്ദമേനോൻ: കുന്നംകുളത്തിന്റെ കാര്യമൊക്കെ ഈ തോട്ടിലാണു് കിടക്കുന്നതു"! (ചിരി)

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: അതെ. വാസ്തവത്തിൽ കുന്നംകുളത്തിന്റെ അഭിവൃദ്ധി ഈ തോടിന്റെ നിർമ്മാണത്തിലാണാശ്രയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നതു്. മുനിസിപ്പാലിറ്റിയെ ടൌൺകൌൺസിലോ ഏറ്റെടുത്തതുകൊണ്ടും അത്ര വിഷമകരമായ ഒരു നില ഇന്നു കുന്നംകുളത്തില്ല. പ്രകൃതി രമണീയമായ ചില കുന്നുകളിന്മേലാണു് കുന്നംകുളം സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്യുന്നതു്. ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മിനിസ്റ്റർ ഈ ബിൽ ഇവിടെ അവതരിപ്പിച്ച അവസരത്തിൽ ഇപ്രകാരം പറഞ്ഞു. "ഇതു് പാസാക്കുകയാണെങ്കിൽ ഒരു വലിയ ഭൂരിപക്ഷത്തോടു കൂടിയായിരിക്കണം. അല്ലെങ്കിൽ അദ്ദേഹം പിൽവലിക്കുവാൻ തയ്യാറാണു"" എന്നു പറയുകയുണ്ടായി. ഈ ബില്ലിന്റെ കാര്യത്തിൽ അദ്ദേഹം റിസർവ്ഡ് ഫാഹിന്റെ ആനുകൂല്യം സമ്പാദിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ടാൻസഫേഡ് ഹാഹിന്റെ ആനുകൂല്യം സമ്പാദിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു തോന്നുന്നില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ പി. ഗോവിന്ദമേനോൻ: ടാൻസ്ഫേഡ് ഫാഹിൽ മെമ്പർമാരില്ല.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: പഞ്ചായത്തു ബിൽ ഇവിടെ അവതരിപ്പിച്ച അവസരത്തിൽ അതിനെ ടാൻസ്ഫേഡ് ഫാഹ് എതിർക്കുമ്പോൾ റിസർവേഡ് ഫാഹിനു് എതിർക്കാതെ തരമില്ലെന്നു ദിവാൻജിയവർകൾ തന്നെ എന്നോടു് പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുണ്ടു്. അതുകൊണ്ടു് കൊച്ചിൻ കോൺഗ്രസ്സ്പാർട്ടി ഇപ്പോൾ ഇവിടെ ഉണ്ടെങ്കിൽ ആ പാർട്ടി ഈ ബിൽ.....

മിസ്റ്റർ പി. ഗോവിന്ദമേനോൻ: ടാൻസ്ഫേഡ് ഫാഹ് എന്നതു് ഏഴ ഡിപ്പാർട്ട്മെൻറാണു്.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: എന്റെ അറിവിൽ പെട്ടിടത്തോളം കൊച്ചിൻ കോൺഗ്രസു് എന്നുള്ള രാഷ്ട്രീയ കക്ഷി കന്നിമാസം ഫാനു മുതൽ അസ്തമിച്ചു എന്നാണു് മനസ്സിലായിട്ടുള്ളതു്. ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട ജനകീയമന്ത്രി ഉൾപ്പെട്ട കക്ഷിക്കു് യഥാർത്ഥത്തിൽ അവരുടെ ആദർശപ്രകാരം പ്രവൃത്തിക്കുവാനുള്ള മനസ്ഥിതിയില്ലെങ്കിൽ ജനകീയമന്ത്രിയുടെ സ്ഥാനം നിയമപ്രകാരവും രാഷ്ട്രീയതത്വങ്ങൾ പ്രകാരവും എവിടെയിരിക്കുന്നുവെന്നു് ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട-മന്ത്രിയോ ആ കക്ഷിയുടെ ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട സിക്രട്ടറിയവർകളോ പറഞ്ഞാൽ കൊള്ളാം.

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Deputy President: We are not concerned with the domestic politics of the parties.

മിസ്റ്റർ സി. വി. ഇയ്യു: മേല്പറഞ്ഞ കാരണങ്ങളാൽ ഞാൻ ഈ ബില്ലിന്റെ പൊതുവെയുള്ള സ്വഭാവത്തെ എതിർത്തുകൊണ്ട് വിരമിക്കുന്നു.

Mr. M. K. Devassy *(Adur):* Sir, I rise to oppose this Bill and before doing so I wish to inform the House that I am no more a member of the party whose leader has introduced this Bill. I have severed my connection with the Cochin Congress Party, the immediate reason being the introduction of this Bill. Yesterday, while this Bill was introduced by the Hon'ble Minister, it was remarked by him that this Bill is introduced by him at the instance of this House. He was also frank enough to remark that he was not at all particular that this Bill should be carried and that it is left to this House to express its dissent or assent to the Bill. But I wish to explain, Sir, that the fact that the Hon'ble Minister has informed the House at one time or other that he contemplates the introduction of a Bill for the re-organisation of Panchayats does not mean that this House has given its assent to a Bill of any and every sort which the Minister takes it into his head to introduce. I wish to remark that if this House has wanted the re-organisation of the Panchayats, it is out of the earnest desire of the House that there should be a re-organisation. But when a man feels thirsty and calls for water, and if he is given poison, I believe that that man is no more compelled to take poison, because he has called for water. I take it that this Bill involves as a fundamental principle something which is highly detrimental to the interests of the public which to my mind cannot be supported by us. Let it also be understood that the opposition to this Bill by me should not be understood as a failure on my part to appreciate the investiture of Panchayats with greater and greater powers. I am for it. But the investiture of greater powers on the Panchayats should not mean that the people for whom the Panchayats are meant have to undergo as a matter of course the additional burden of paying more and more taxes to Government *(Hear, hear)*. I have been hearing from the Hon'ble Member for Cheruthuruthi that after all the taxation that this Bill contemplates will not fall on the ordinary or the average rung of the people. One thing is clear from the Bill, that the Government is prepared to maintain only certain specified items in a town constituted under this Bill. That means that if a town under this Bill should have the necessary amenities, the Government will go only to a certain extent and if it wants beyond it, it must contribute for itself. Now the Government is spending the whole money out of a single taxation. By this Bill the people will have to pay double tax. It is on this principle of double taxation that I

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think it proper to oppose this Bill. It has been pointed out here, both by the Minister who introduced the Bill and by some other members, that instead of 5,000 which is here there is no harm to increase the population to 8,000 or more. I ask from a perusal of clause 3 whether there is any specified area in which you calculate the population. Where is the safety even if you put the calculation at 30 thousand, because it is left to the Government under this Bill to constitute an area of 10 miles or 1,000 miles as a Town Council and a place where you get 5,000 people can be easily converted into a place consisting of 20 thousand people by simply extending the area of the town which comes under this Bill. How does the increase in the number of people of the town as contemplated by clause 3 improve the situation? My submission before the House is that any village however much it deserves or not can be made a town under the Bill irrespective of its population. It is left to the Government to decide. There is no safety for any village in the State if the Government wants to apply the provisions of this Bill.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* Why not bring in an amendment?

Mr. M. K. Devassy *(Adur):* I am coming to the question of amendment. I am saying that we should not be misunderstood by the sponsors of the Bill that we are refusing to be taxed or pay due regard to the possibilities of amendment by the Select Committee. I am only saying that clause 3 which defines the towns according to the Bill is a clause which deals with the fundamental principle of the Bill and even a change in the number of people in the towns will not improve matters, because there is no specified extent according to this clause.

Now, Sir, it was pointed out incidentally by my Hon'ble friend for Cheruthuruthi that the taxation under this Bill will fall mainly on the richer classes. As an instance, to contradict his very argument, I may point out that one clause in this Bill says that a Town Council has no power to collect tolls for a car. Other sections of the Bill would have it that, you can impose tax on carriages, on carts and smaller things. I would respectfully ask the Hon'ble Member for Cheruthuruthi, whether this is in the interest of the richer or the poor classes. I was surprised to hear the Hon'ble Member for Cheruthuruthi of an absolute disregard of the difficulty of taxing the towns I would expect that the Hon'ble Member for Cheruthuruthi ought to be the last person to make such a remark, because from his experiences in a municipal town in attempting to tax the people of Trichur, he would have come to understand the gravity, the intensity of the feeling with which the people are

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opposed to taxation *(Hear, hear)*. Therefore Sir, on a fundamental principle of double taxation, I wish to oppose the Bill. In so opposing, I wish to remark that the sponsors of the Bill should never misunderstand our attempt to mean as a dis-appreciation of increasing the powers of the Panchayats. We will be the first persons to support a Bill which goes to enhance the powers of the local self-governing bodies without detriment to the people, or without compelling people to pay additional taxation. With these few words, I think, it is my duty to oppose the Bill.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar *(Nemmara)*: Mr. President, Sir, I rise to oppose this measure. I do not wish to indulge in irrelevant matters nor do I wish to discuss domestic politics when discussing this Bill and any attempt made by any hon'ble member to try to make a point out of any political situation during the discussion of this measure is certainly irrelevant and it is quite unnecessary. But when such statements during the discussion of a Bill are made, when that discussion is availed off by certain other members, by means of interruptions to give lessons in political science and political etiquette to other persons, I wish to issue a warning that they are undertaking a business for which they are not paid. Nor is that attitude justified from them. And let them also kindly understand, that we, who have taken the responsibility of severing our connection from a political party and have dared to form a new party of our own, are also able to take care of ourselves without getting lessons in political etiquette from the hon'ble members who pretend they know too much about these things.

With regard to this Bill, Sir, I can say confidently that so far as my constituency is concerned, I am in possession of definite information that they are opposed to the principle underlying this Bill.

Mr. K. Ayyappan *(Ezhuvas-Kanayannur)*: What is the method of showing it ? Re-election !

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar *(Nemmara)*: I am stating my attitude with regard to this Bill. But, I suppose this interruption is shown to be totally irrelevant. My objection with regard to this particular Bill is that my constituency is opposed to it.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu)*: It is a town.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar *(Nemmara)*: It is an interruption which does not require a reply at all. They are not prepared to pay the additional taxation that is necessary. There is no other objection. I can't understand why while the administration is being carried on and all the needs of the locality are being met,

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by a certain proportion of revenue, an additional burden should be introduced by means of a legislation.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar *(Cheruthuruthi):* To provide for more amenities.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar *(Nemmara):* We are satisfied with the existing amenities. Each man is expected to know of his own requirements and each man is expected to know what is good for him. If a certain locality or a certain individual does not want a thing, I cannot understand this patriotic way of pouring something down their throat against their wishes. It is unnecessary. It is not democratic.

Mr. K. M. Ibrahim *(Cranganur):* In the municipalities, you tax. Where is then the spoon-feeding?

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar *(Nemmara):* So what I wish to say is this. When a particular locality does not need the power of taxation, it is unnecessary to introduce a measure by Government by which power is given for additional taxation.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Rural):* It has been more than once stated here that it is only permissive.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar *(Nemmara):* If the Town Council is constituted and the local needs are entirely left to its own management, they cannot get on without taxation. Scavenging, roads other than trunk-roads and other amenities will have to be maintained out of public funds which should be raised by the Council. In such a case it will be a burden and an additional taxation, which is uncalled for.

The most important point on which I object to this Bill is that it confers power and authority for additional taxation. Much discussion has ensued with regard to the other provisions contained in the Bill and I do not wish to prolong this discussion by taking out different sections to which we raise objection. I say now there is no necessity for the multiplicity of mush-room local self-governing institutions which may not be able to maintain themselves. On that ground, I oppose this Bill.

Again, Cochin is a very small State. Compared to British India it is not even as big as a taluk. It is a little less than Wyanad Taluk in British Malabar or Pollachi in Coimbatore. In such places we have only some 3 or 4 municipalities. There are some 85 to 100 small self-governing institutions in the nature of Panchayats here spreading all over the State. And the attempt should be to introduce a measure to enhance the powers of the Panchayats. It should be seen that they are worked more efficiently. Complaints are heard every-

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where that the Panchayat administration is not all that it should be. I wonder why an additional institution like Town Councils should be established in order to multiply those self-governing minor institutions which would find themselves very difficult to get that income they want by voluntary taxation of the residents, within the boundaries of the Town Councils. On these grounds among many others mentioned by my friends I oppose this measure.

Mr. Puthur Achyuta Menon *(Kattur):* Mr. President, Sir, I rise to oppose this Bill. I am sorry Sir, that people who pose so much that they know so much of constitutional practices and conventions pretend that they do not know anything about the procedure to be adopted in the introduction of a Bill into a Legislative Assembly. If we are to go by the Bill as it is and the explanation given to it by the Hon'ble Member for Mulakunnathukavu and various other members who supported the Bill, if we are to go by their speeches, I think they have made out a case why the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. We do not want the Bill to be referred to a Select Committee or to be introduced, a Bill in which we do not find any principle whatsoever at this present stage leaving aside or neglecting the explanations offered after the introduction by the Hon'ble Minister.

Our main point of objection is that there is no restriction regarding the area to which this Bill is to be applied. The Hon'ble Member for Mulakunnathukavu explained that that area must be deemed to be the area comprising of compact places. I am not prepared to take his explanation for that and on the ground that in this Bill which is proposed to be introduced into this Council there is the absence of the fundamental principles to be worked out in the Select Committee, I oppose it at this first stage itself.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar *(Cheruthuruthi):* Can't you bring in amendments ?

Mr. Puthur Achyuta Menon *(Kattur):* An amendment cannot be moved on principle. It could be moved only on details.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Rural):* Sir, I stand here not to oppose the passing of the Bill. But I wish to say that this Bill is superfluous and unnecessary. This is almost a verbatim copy of the Municipal Act. The only difference is that I find on p. 12, that the trunk roads which are now maintained by Government will not be given to the Town Councils for their maintenance. For that the toll is taken away, and the amount which the Government use to pay the municipalities from the Patrol duty will not also be given.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar *(Nellayi):* What about rate of taxation ?

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Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Rural):* The rate of taxation is quite different. Here the maximum is the minimum in the case of municipalities. It contains the much discussed point, palaces owned by the members of the Cochin Ruling Family, etc. Further the Lady Member will remember that she has been saying that agricultural lands have been taxed in the Chittur Municipality. This Bill contains that also. I know how that tax came to be imposed in Chittur. It was at the command of the Government that I imposed it, while I was Chairman.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* The references are obscure.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Rural):* They may be obscure. Because you can put a few words together, you can speak loudly, that does not mean that you know all *(Laughter)*.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* I mean references to the Chittur Municipality. We do not know anything about the politics in the Chittur Municipality.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Rural):* In Chittur Municipality cultivating lands are taxed. This fact had been before the Council many a time, and even recently.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* Thank you for the information *(Laughter)*.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Rural):* Yesterday you were here and you would have understood it then. As the Bill at present stands, I do not see any place in Cochin State, except Kunnamkulam where this Bill can be introduced and if it is introduced in any other place, I am sure the Minister will find it very difficult to carry on the Government and he will be causing trouble. To take for instance another place, the much-talked of Nemmara. There what will be the house-tax? And where is the profession tax there? Nothing. Although all these taxes can be imposed, I do not think it possible to raise a good sum from Nemmara *(hear, hear)*.

My friend, Mr. Warriar had been saying that the population was not taken into account when the Town Council came into existence originally. It was taken into account by the authorities then and that was the reason why Tattamangalam was tacked on to Chittur, because Chittur did not contain the requisite population.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar *(Cheruthuruthi):* What I said was that the Act does not contain any provision to the effect.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Rural):* Therefore what I wish to say is that there is no use of having on the statute book this Bill,

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മിസ്റ്റർ ബി. എം. പീറർ: എനിക്ക് ഈ ബില്ലിനെ എതിക്കുവാനിട യായതിൽ വളരെ വ്യസനമുണ്ട്. ഗ്രാമോദ്ധാരണത്തിനായി പുറപ്പെട്ട നമ്മുടെ ഗ്രാമോദ്ധാരണം എതാണ്ടു പൂർത്തീകരിച്ചതു പോലേയാണ് തോന്നുന്നതു്. കൊച്ചിയിൽ ആകെയുള്ള വില്ലേജുകളുടെ എണ്ണം നോക്കിയാൽ ഉദ്ദേശം ൨൫൪ വില്ലേജുകളുണ്ടു്. ഈ ൨൫൪ വില്ലേജുകളിൽ ൫,൧൦൦-ൽ പരം ജനസംഖ്യയുള്ളവ ഉദ്ദേശം ൩൦ -ൽ പരം വില്ലേജുകൾ വരുമെന്നാണ് തോന്നുന്നതു്. എന്നാൽ ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മന്ത്രിയവർകൾക്ക് തന്റെ ഈ കുറഞ്ഞ കാലാവധിക്കുള്ളിൽ ൩൦ -ൽ പരം വില്ലേജുകളെ പട്ടണങ്ങളായി പരിണമിപ്പിക്കത്തക്ക വിധത്തിലുള്ള ഒരു ബിൽ ഇവിടെ കൊണ്ടുവരുവാൻ സാധിച്ചതിൽ ഞാൻ അദ്ദേഹത്തെ അനുമോദിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു. എന്നാൽ ഗ്രാമീണരായിരിക്കുന്ന ഞങ്ങൾ അങ്ങിനെയുള്ള ഒരു ഗ്രാമോദ്ധാരണമല്ല ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടുന്നതു്. ഞങ്ങൾക്കു് ഗ്രാമങ്ങളെ പുനരുദ്ധരിക്കുന്നതിനു തടസ്ഥരായി നില്ക്കുന്നതു് പണത്തിന്റെ അഭാവം മാത്രമാണു്. അതിനൊരു മാർഗ്ഗം ഉണ്ടാക്കുകയല്ലാതെ വീണ്ടും ടാക്സുകൾ ഗ്രാമവാസികളെ വിഷമിപ്പിക്കുന്നതിനു നിലയിൽ നിയമം കൊണ്ടുവരുന്നതു് ശരിയല്ലെന്നാണ് എന്റെ അഭിപ്രായം. കൊച്ചി സംസ്ഥാനത്തു് വളരെ ജനങ്ങൾ തിങ്ങിപ്പാർക്കുന്നതു് പട്ടണങ്ങളിലാണു്. അവർ തന്നെ ഈ ടാക്സിന്റെ ഉപദ്രവം ഒഴിക്കുവാൻ വേണ്ടി അടുത്ത വില്ലേജുകളെയാണ് അഭയം പ്രാപിക്കുന്നതു്. അങ്ങിനെയുള്ള വില്ലേജുകളും കൂടി പട്ടണമാക്കിക്കഴിഞ്ഞാൽ സാധുക്കൾ കൂടിനെ അഭയം പ്രാപിക്കേണ്ടതായിവരും. അങ്ങിനെ സാധുക്കളെ ടാക്സു് ചുമത്തി ഉപദ്രവിക്കുന്നതു ശരിയല്ലെന്നാണ് എന്റെ അഭിപ്രായം. ബഹുമാനപ്പെട്ട മന്ത്രി തന്നെ പറയട്ടെ, അദ്ദേഹം ഗ്രാമങ്ങളെ സന്ദർശിച്ച അവസരത്തിൽ ഗ്രാമങ്ങളുടെ പുനരുദ്ധാരണത്തിനു് ഇങ്ങിനെയൊരു നിയമം വേണമെന്നു് ആരെങ്കിലും പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുള്ളതായിട്ടു്. അങ്ങിനെ ഗ്രാമവാസികൾ ആവശ്യപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ടെന്നു് അദ്ദേഹം പറയുന്ന പക്ഷം ഞാൻ തീർച്ചയായും ഇതിനെ അനുകൂലിക്കും. അതിനു അദ്ദേഹത്തിനു സാധ്യമല്ലെങ്കിൽ ഞാൻ ബില്ലിനെ എതിക്കുന്നു. ഇത്ര മാത്രമേ എനിക്കു പറയുവാനുള്ളു.

*Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Ernakulam):* Sir, I had absolutely no idea of partaking in this debate, but the trend of discussion in this House compels me to make a few observations especially after the speech made by the hon'ble Ex-Secretary of the Cochin Congress Party. It was pointed out by the hon'ble member that if this Bill is passed into law, Government can by a stroke of the pen convert the whole of Cochin State into several municipalities. There is a fundamental fallacy involved in that argument. Act XVIII of 1113 which is the Cochin Municipal Act contains the same provisions as is contained in section 3 of this Bill. There, Government have got the power to fix the municipal limits, add to or alter from those limits any area which Government contemplate either to be brought in a particular municipality or to be taken out from that particular municipality. And yet we, as a matter of fact find that Government have not as yet played foul with that absolute

*Speech not corrected by the hon'ble member.

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power vested in them by adding on to the Ernakulam Municipality Elamkulam, Kadavanthara and other villages that lie adjacent to it.

Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar *(Secretary to Government):* In that Act is there not power to establish new municipalities?

Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Ernakulam):* Yes. There is power. That is another argument. It will be found therefore that the argument that Government can by virtue of section 3 convert a village or group of villages into a municipal area cannot stand any test of scrutiny. It is only after a preliminary notification is published by Government and after receiving petitions from the inhabitants concerned and if the objections are well-founded, unless we take it that Government is so unreasonable as to flout public opinion, we cannot take it as a dangerous provision. Therefore on that ground any opposition to this Bill does not seem to be quite reasonable.

The second point urged was that it involves a scheme of double taxation and therefore on that ground an Hon'ble member opposed this Bill. I humbly ask the Hon'ble members of this House, is not a double scheme of taxation involved in the very Cochin Income Tax Act? Those who have to pay land tax will have to pay income tax also. That is not exactly what is meant by double taxation. This is what is meant by double taxation. People who are now residing in the municipality have to pay profession tax to the municipality based upon the schedule prescribed in the Act. They also have to pay there income-tax on account of the very profession, so that for exercising the same profession one party within the municipality has to pay a tax not only to the municipality but also to the Government. There it is double taxation. And if certain areas in the State have been enjoying the privileges of municipal administration even from the days the Town Councils were first constituted in the State, to say that other developed areas in the State should not have privilege for the reason that they will have to pay additional taxation, that reason only tantamounts to saying that because this Bill involves a scheme of taxation, no matter, we are going to oppose it. If that is the fundamental ground on which this Bill is opposed, I can very well understand that opposition.

The third ground raised by the Hon'ble member was that significantly this Bill does not embrace the collection of tolls as we have within the purview of the town councils to be constituted by this Act. For that purpose it has been explained by Hon'ble Minister at the very outset that the burden of maintaining the roads within municipal areas is not to be left to the municipality but will continue to be under the control of the Government. Tolls are

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really instituted for the purpose of maintenance of roads and if that burden is to be taken away from the town councils to be constituted under this Act, it is no argument to say that even though these roads have to be maintained by Government, we must have power to institute the tolls. There is according to me another fallacy also involved in that argument, because if you are to go by the population basis as contemplated in this Act, there is a possibility of there being several town councils within the State. And if each town council is given the power to institute tolls at the entrance of their boundary, a person who may have to travel within the length and breadth of Cochin State may have to pay a large number of tolls inconsistent with the advantages that he may be said to derive on account of the fact that he is driving only a few furlongs on roads most probably between two town councils. Therefore, from the general scheme of the Bill it can be gathered that the idea with which tolls are exempted from the purview of this Act can be taken to be mainly on account of the fact that there will be a plethora of tolls in the State. And secondly, to advance an argument that because tolls are excluded, we should not be saddled with the burden of maintaining these roads, is not just. The Bill says you need not maintain the roads, but it will be done by Government. Apart from all these considerations I fail to see any other argument. I hope that this Bill, if it becoms law, will certainly be administered by the popular Minister and that is probably the very reason why the Hon'ble Minister has tabled this Bill here. If that is so, the popular Minister under the control of the majority party in the Council can never be expected to flout the opinion of the people whose interests are really prejudiced if a certain area is constituted into a Town Council. If he flouts their opinion the place will be too hot for such a Minister and he will not be in position and he will not have the power to act at all if this Bill becomes law. Therefore in taking the question as to whether a Bill which gives the largest amount of power to the local areas should be opposed on the ground of taxation and taxation alone is the only thing that has to be considered according to me. On that point opinions may differ. I find on a casual perusal of this Bill that what the Hon'ble Minister has done is, he has erred, I should think, largely in conferring such large powers upon local areas where these Town Councils are to be constituted even at the first instance. In any way that will not affect the principle involved in this Bill. As a matter of fact, when the Town Councils were first constituted in the State, if hon'ble members will only peruse the first Act, it will be found that the power vested by this Bill are far far larger, because as a matter of fact it is the latest Act, XVIII of 1113 that is taken as the model for this Bill—a Bill

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for which the developed Municipalties of the State had to fight for nearly a decade. Therefore I should also say at this juncture that the question as to whether such enlarged powers can be given as an experimental measure even to a local area will yet remain as a serious problem, and the matter will certainly be thrashed out if the Bill is referred to a Select Committee. Therefore, my submission is far from saying that I am either prepared on account of the general principles to support this Bill in its entirety, the principle cannot be objected to that local areas should be democratised, that people should also bear a small share of the burden which they expect Government alone to bear in matters connected with public health. If the argument is to be accepted that this Bill is out of place, then, I would say that the same argument can be utilised for the purpose of saying that all the Municipalities within the State should be abolished. If the hon'ble members of this House feel that the major Municipalities by their existence all these years have absolutely brought about no developments, no matter however little they be, and if they have not justified their existence, then you say good-bye to all those self-governing institutions in this State. Are we proclaiming to the world that we are not fit to work the constitution which has been so graciously conferred upon us by His Highness the Maharaja? Have we not got a responsibility in the matter, I ask. If we have got, the proceedings of the Legislative Council will show that. If the Hon'ble Minister who is elected from a majority party is allowed to guide the destinies of 7 departments of the State, are we going to enter into differences upon this Bill, which after all confers large democratic powers upon the peoples' representatives. If we say that we cannot do that, we are confessing our inability to work this constitution and God forbid that there should ever be such a contingency. I can only regret that, on account of the introduction of this Bill my Hon'ble friend the ex-Secretary of the Cochin Congress Party has tendered his resignation. I for one do feel myself sorry for the same, because as a result ofsuch an action and that in connection with such a Bill as this, it considerably pains my mind and that was why I made it a point to partake in this discussion. With these few words, I resume my seat.

Mr. V. K. Baskara Menon *(Cranganur):* I rise to oppose this Bill. We have now heard the three fundamental fallacies very eloquently explained by the Hon'ble Member for Ernakulam. The first fundamental fallacy according to him is that there are provisions in the Municipal Act which are absolutely sufficient to invest the Government with powers to constitute minor Municipalities all over the State and that the Government in exercise of those powers have not deemed it proper to constitute minor Municipalities up to this time.

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Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Ernakulam):* That was not my agrument. My argument was that for extending the area of the Municipality, no part of the country was tacked on to any Municipality.

Mr. V. K. Baskara Menon *(Cranganur):* Now my submission to this House is that if there are provisions already in the Municipal Act which give the Government powers to constitute minor Municipalities under section 373 of this Act, I would regard this Bill as absolutely superfluous. In this connection it will be interesting to refer to the Cochin Town Councils Bill. There, it is said that "the Bill is only a close adaptation of the Cochin Municipal Act, and empowers Government to constitute Town Councils with the minimum of 10 councillors....." Now in this connection, the relevant section, section 373 of the Municipal Act might be referred to. That section runs as follows: The Government may, by notification, issued after previous publication, constitue any specified area and extend to it subject to such restrictions as they may deem fit. When there is this power already there, I cannot understand what exactly is the necessity for a Bill of this sort. That is why I say that this Bill is highly superfluous.

As regards the constitutional aspect enunciated by the Diwan, *i.e.*, investing the Minister with larger powers, I fully appreciate that the Minister ought to have larger powers over Municipalities. But then there is absolutely nothing wrong in giving the Minister the power to administer these minor municipalities constituted under section 373 without the introduction of this new Bill. There are enough provisions in the Government of Cochin Act by which the Government can transfer more departments, if they so think fit, to the popular Minister. And I am positively sure that our Minister will be absolutely efficient in the matter of administration of any number of departments that may be transferred to him. What we want is some measure which will not burden the rural population with any more taxation. What we want is the transfer of departments in which the Hon'ble Minister might be able to effect very serious retrenchment and thus to enable him to find the funds necessary for improving the condition of the rural population without resort to additional taxation. On this ground of additional taxation it is that I am opposing this Bill.

My submission to this House is that we have been having a number of Bills introduced in this Council all of which have got some sort of bearing on the indebtedness of the rural population. We have had extreme Bills, moderate Bills, conservative Bills and compromise

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Bills. All these show that the condition of the rural population is something very serious. Now at such a juncture as this to introduce a Bill which brings the burden of additional taxation on their shoulders, is, I think, unfair and I think the Hon'ble Minister will be the first person to withdraw the Bill from consideration by this House. I can appreciate the difficulty of the Hon'ble Minister in attending to the needs of the rural population. I can appreciate his difficulties in that he is not having sufficient funds, funds enough to run the rural administration. And I am sure he would not have cared to bring such a measure, because he will be the last person to tax the people, when he has got funds. It is, I think, this paucity of funds that has forced him to come with this Bill. What I wish to impress upon the Minister is that he should try and see whether he cannot find funds to improve the condition of the rural population without resort to provisions of such a drastic nature as are contained in this Bill and when it is found that it is absolutely impossible to improve the condition of the rural population, it will be time for us to think and decide whether extra taxation should be resorted to.

Mr. V. N. Damodaran Nambiar *(Trippunittura):* Sir, I rise to support this Bill. In fact, I welcome it as a most important measure not only on the ground that it confers some real power on the people, but also on the ground that it is a step in the right direction, *i. e.*, a step towards the decentralisation of governmental functions. We have been clamouring for responsible government, and I think we have got a bit of it now. There is no use, according to me, of transferring a lot of departments into the hands of one popular Minister if it is not followed by sufficient decentralisation of that authority in order to make the government more effective and more useful for the public at large. This Bill confers some real power on the people, *i. e.*, on the people in those places where according to the Bill, Town Councils will be formed, and I do not think I will be justified in opposing it simply on the fear that it may result in additional taxation. Of course, it should not be misunderstood that I am one who welcomes additional taxation. Nobody as a matter of fact, welcomes additional taxation. But I confess, I am not one, who is afraid of taxation. Simply because there is taxation, it does not mean that it should in all cases tell very heavily upon the people. Without taxation, none of the functions of the Government can be carried out and no taxation need worry any people if we are sure that the tax that is going to be levied is equitable and just.

In the matter of the levy of taxation under this Bill complete control is given to the Councils that are going to be formed under this Act and I do not understand the argument that has been advanced on the floor of this House that immediately this Bill is passed into

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law, all the taxes mentioned in the Bill would be falling on our shoulders. The complete power of taxing the people is left to us and discretion to levy it is left to the Council that is going to be formed under this Act. I therefore do not at all fear the bogey of taxation that has been advanced as an argument for opposing this Bill.

I do not think that an elaborate discussion on my part is necessary, since most of the points have already been drawn to the notice of the House by the hon'ble members. But I only want to say that in case this Bill is going to be referred to a Select Committee, one fact should be particularly borne in mind by the Committee. Unlike the Municipalities already existing in the big towns, the Town Councils that are to be constituted under the Act may not be able to levy sufficient taxes in order to carry on the functions that will be entrusted to them. Therefore it will be necessary to make some provision in the Bill to the effect that the Government should contribute an amount proportionate to the amount collected by the Council in order to replenish the funds that will be entrusted to the Councils, going to be constituted under the Act.

I think, if I remember correct, the Hon'ble Minister himself on some previous occasion—I do not remember exactly when—assured this House, that in case such Councils are going to be constituted, a sum equal to the amount that will be collected by the Councils, will be contributed by the Government. I am not able to clearly say on what occasion he made that assurance. But I remember he has assured this House on some previous occasion that such a contribution would be made by the Government in consideration of the Councils' undertaking this responsibility.

I would therefore request the committee that may be constituted now, to modify the provisions in such a way that sufficient funds would be left with the Council in order to carry on the functions that will be entrusted to them under the Act. With these few observations, I welcome this Bill.

Mr. A. L. Antony *(Irinjalakkuda):* Sir, I want to speak only a few words with regard to this Bill. I do neither oppose nor support it. What I want to bring to the notice of the house is that the collection which is probably expected is very little. Profession tax will be very little in the villages, there is no toll, and the other license fees will be very little. But the establishment charges will be more than what will be collected by the Town Council. Out of the little experience which I have got with our own Municipality of Irinjalakuda, excepting the tolls, we will not be able to meet the establishment charges, though the rent of the Office is paid by the Government. There must be every officer, if it is a Town

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Council. There must be an Overseer, a Sanitary Inspector, a Peon, a Head clerk and many others. That will come to about Rs. 7,000. Apart from the tolls, even in the Trichur Municipality—I ask the Chairman himself—where a lakh of rupees is collected from tolls, whether they will be able to run the machinery. Apart from the tolls, the Hon'ble Minister also knows, the real income of that Municipality is very small. There in spite of the Christian merchants and great profession taxes, they are not able to meet the charges.

Mr. A. B. Salem *(Mattancheri):* What about Mattancheri? The similar is the case there.

Mr. A. L. Antony *(Irinjalakuda):* That is why you are borrowing money from the Government.

So I want to bring to the notice of the House that even though the cot is very small, it must have four legs. If there must be a Town Council, there must be a bill collector to collect. You will have to pay him Rs. 15 per mensem. If you should have two bill-collectors, you have to pay more. Then with the minimum house-tax how can you be able to meet our wants, apart from the tolls? The funds after meeting the expenditure every year will be very little. Whether it is worth the while to constitute Town Councils in such places where the income is very meagre I leave it to the Hon'ble Minister to see.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar *(Cheruthuruthi):* Government used to give liberal grants with regard to Municipalities.

Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Ernakulam):* One taluk overseer can be entrusted with the work of 2 or 3 Town Councils. That is all a matter of adjustment.

* **Dr. A. R. Menon** *(Minister for Rural Development):* Sir, I am sure the House has listened with great pleasure the very brilliant debate carried on on this subject, a debate which has touched almost all the various aspect of this complex question. I am indeed very thankful to my friend Mr. Sivarama Menon than whom there is no one who could speak with greater authority on civic administration in the State at the present time, was able to find his way at least to support the principle underlying this measure reserving naturally the various points, the various clauses in this Bill for future discussion. I am sure, when I introduced this measure, I expected the same attitude from the whole House. As I have said yesterday, I again repeat that a desire has been exhibited in this House that this

*Speech not corrected by the hon'ble member.

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machinery of civic administration so far as rural areas are concerned should be overhauled and a Bill will be introduced. I challenge this House if it is not a fact that a question has been addressed to me why I have taken more time, why I have not yet introduced this measure in the last budget session. I said then that the Bill is almost ready and that it could not be introduced in the budget session for want of time. It seems to me, Sir, that the House has a short memory in this matter. I have said yesterday that what else do you expect from a popular Minister sitting here. Do you expect the popular Minister to buttress democracy or try to take as much power as possible and hand it over to the representatives of the people? I was surprised, Sir, that the representatives of the people themselves come forward and criticise their Minister for granting them wider and greater powers. And as Mr. Sivarama Menon testified, we are going powers which it took nearly 30 to 40 years to get from the Government with regard to the major Municipalities. Is it my sin that I with both hands showered this Municipal administration, the gift of civic administration to the popular leaders? Is it my sin that I always allied with the representatives of the people against encroachment by the beaucracy? I am surprised, Sir, that such an attitude should have been adopted by this House. I quite appreciate the difficulties pointed out by Mr. Antony, and as Mr. Sivarama Menon pointed out, we have to devise methods so as to reduce the expenditure and enable some of these Councils to work properly. Mere ingenuity has been shown by my friends sitting over there in their imagination that the whole of the Cochin State is going to be divided and I am going to indulge in some subterfuges to bring villages and villages together and to club them together. I have stated clearly and as an instance even the public have understood the meaning and implication of this measure, because I have noted in many of the papers particulars of the towns that are likely to be taken. They did not include a portion of Adur or any other place and made it 20,000 population and called it a Municipality. I cannot hope to fight against the legal ingenuity, because I was not in that field. But commonsense suggests that when a measure of this kind is introduced, it is intended for a specific purpose in certain specified areas. And that the general public have understood it in that way is shown clearly by the statement. Surely Kunnamkulam comes first. Secondly they said Vadakkancheri. Third they said most probably Chalakkudi. The fourth is definitely Nemmara. Why? Why should the general public contribute money for the enjoyment of electricity in a place like Nemmara? I want to know that. There is nothing special to Nemmara.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar *(Nemmara):* That was established before the Ministry came into existence.

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Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* I am now going to dis-establish the privilege, enjoyed by a few towns at the expense of the Cochin State. That is the answer to that charge.

Mr. A. L. Antony *(Irinjalakkuda):* Will they get light there?

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* They get everything there. Do you think they are contributing anything? They are not contributing anything.

Then the charge is that the people are poor. Are there no poor people in Ernakulam? How many rickshawallas are drawing rickshaws here. I used to see a hundred of those people sitting and sleeping in their own vehicles waiting to get 2 annas. Ask the Municipal Chairman whether he is not collecting money from these people? The money collected from them is given to them in another form by improving roads, etc., so that their rickshaws are kept in proper condition and the exertion necessary to pull them is reduced to the minimum. That is the idea.

The other argument is this, give us powers but don't tax us. Well, I want the House to realise that power, convenience and privileges go hand in hand with responsibility. A person who asks for responsibility and who only desires for the power is not likely to achieve it. Therefore, if it is so in the case of individuals it applies with equal force in the case of the people or of a nation. He who shirks the responsibility has no right to claim privileges. He who claims privileges must be in a position to bear the burden and bear the responsibility. It is only by bearing the burden and responsibility and the incidental privileges that we could make ourselves a nation of self-reliance, a nation fit to carry on the administration ourselves. Therefore, I consider and I submit with reason that for any development of representative system of Government we must begin from the very beginning. Yet realising our limitations and our difficulties, I purposely omitted the Panchayat legislation. There is a question addressed to me, as to when I am going to introduce the Panchayat Bill. I realise the difficulties and our limitations and therefore instead of a full-fledged Panchayat Bill I restricted it to towns. The House will realise that there are 3 stages. At first a number of villages together or a single village constituting a Panchayat. Then the 2nd stage when this Panchayat grows into a town and the third stage fully grown up towns. Now, there are a number of towns which ceased to be Panchayats in the true sense, but which have not attained the status or the position of a full-grown town. This Bill applies only to those towns. You say, take a certain area and make a population of 20,000 there and introduce this measure, as if

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I have got a grudge against the people of the Cochin State that I should somehow or other impose a tax upon them.

Then another point that Mr. Nambiar raised was that he expected some contribution from the Government. Of course, the exact proportion I cannot say. Certainly Government will have to come forward and give them contribution, if this measure is to be worked out successfully. The point is this. Even with our contribution these towns find it difficult to meet the elementary requirements of civic life. Therefore, Government propose to help them in their own efforts to improve their civic conditions. What is the absurdity in it? What is the hardship in it? When you talk of poor men you must remember in all Municipalities the majority of them are poor. Why is the rickshawalla in Kunnamkulam or Vadakkancheri a poorer person than a rickshawalla in Trichur? In all places, there are rich men, middle class men and also poor men. As my friend Mr. Nambiar said the taxation is left to you to impose. Government is not going to dictate. I do not think our Government ever asked any Municipality to impose additional taxation. I know it from experience, as Chairman of the Trichur Municipal Council. In fact during my term of Municipal Chairmanship the Government advised us to raise the taxation. But we were able to manage without raising it and the Government never compelled us to levy additional taxation.

It is said, by the method of Aladdin and the wonderful lamp, by rubbing the lamp at a stroke, these villages become towns. Is that the method you are going to propose? I say, no. Villages by natural growth in course of time become small towns. Small towns become big towns later on and big towns, cities. That is an elementary proposition. I am sorry my friend the professor is not here. That proposition is known to everybody and the professor also ought to have known it.

Then, Sir, another point raised by my hon'ble friend Mr. Bhaskara Menon is about taxation. I have already met that point. And I know in some of these areas it may not be possible to get roads according to our expectations. I perfectly agree. It will be the duty of the Government to make exhaustive enquiries, preliminary enquiries and to see whether there is a possibility of installing these institutions in the selected localities. We will not blindly go and introduce this system all at once. It is a mistake to think like that. Would anyone tell me why we cannot introduce it in Vadakkancheri? In every taluk towns there is a Municipality. In Chittur Taluk, Chittur is a Municipality, in the Cochin-Kanayannur Taluk, Ernakulam is a Municipality, in the Trichur Taluk, Trichur is a Municipality, in the Mukundapuram Taluk, there is Irinjalakkuda. Then

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of course Cranganur is out of the picture. The only remaining one Taluk is the Talappalli Taluk. Why not we have a Municipality in Vadakkancheri? The people of Vadakkancheri are very particular to keep it as the head-quarters of that Taluk. When Kunnamkulam wanted it, they raised a hue and cry. It has got a Munsiff's Court, a Magistrate's Court, High School and all other public buildings and public activities going on in a limited area. To say that a legislation on this small scale is injurious, and that it is prejudicial to the interests of the people, is unexpected from any sane person. Now turn to the sister State. What do you notice there? Are there not innumerable second class Municipalities in Travancore?

Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Ernakulam):* In Mysore also they have got a separate legislation there.

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* Alwaye, Parur and various other places are Municipalities. Are you going to tell me that Vadakkancheri and Kunnamkulam are less important localities than Alwaye or Parur either in trade or commerce?

Mr. C. V. Iyyu *(Kunnamkulam):* The Hon'ble Minister will please note that the population of Vadakkancheri is only 5,073 that is only a little above that is fixed here. It is a limited area.

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* A limited area, a very comfortable area! A fine place, tarred road! You ought to be thankful for having a limited area. That is the very reason why 5,000 is put as the number sufficient to constitute a Town Council. It is a very compact area with a thick population, as in the case of the Mattancherri Municipality. Such areas have very many advantages. You know the advantages of the Mattancheri Municipality. Of course, it has its own dis-advantages—mosquitoes.

Now I wish to make one or two general observations, before I finish, because all the other points have been met and met vigorously by the ex-Chairman of the Ernakulam Municipality and by the maiden speech, so far as this Council is concerned, of Mr. Salem and by my friend, Mr. Govinda Menon. They have exhausted all the points and I do not think it proper to take up much of the valuable time of the House.

But I will say only this much. These proceedings are watched not only by Cochin State, but also by other States. They are seeing whether you understand the implications of self-rule. They are watching whether you understand the principles of democracy,

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whether you understand the principles fully, underlying the expression "government by the people, for the people", an expression which we hear everyday, in every platform from this very people who utter in heroic tones. I myself have heard it. They utter these words with all the pushfulness in them, or with an energy which even their health can't command.

I say, you have to consider all the aspects before you decide this issue. This issue may be small, but the principle underlying it is everything. If you deny to share the power and share the responsibility, what right have you to come here tomorrow and demand further concessions of power from the Government. When the power is given, if you find yourselves unable to accept that power, I am asking you, what business have you to agitate for further powers? If powers are given without agitation and if you find yourself unable to accept those powers, you have by no manner or means any right to demand more power from the Government. Understand the implications of these actions.

Mr. K. R. Viswambharan *(Ezhuvas-Talappalli):* Oh, wise men!

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* As I said, these actions are noted not only here, but in other places and if it is known to the world that the people of Cochin, even when power is given for self-government, were unable to accept or disinclined to accept them, it is certainly not desirable. With these few words, gentlemen, I commend this measure for your acceptance.

Motion put and carried.

Mr. V. K. Bhaskara Menon *(Cranganur):* A Poll, Sir.

Poll

Ayes

1	Mr. P. K. Madhava Menon	15	Mr. K. P. Vallon
2	,, Kochukunhan Kaimal	16	,, V. K. Kutty
3	,, Ismail Hajee Essa Sait	17	,, C. K. S. Moni
4	,, Popatlal Goverdhan Lalan	18	,, M. Sivarama Menon
5	,, T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar	19	,, K. R. Ramakrishnan
6	,, K. Ashtamurthi Nambudiripad	20	,, V. N. Damodaran Nambiar
7	,, C. N. Ittiravi Nambudiri	21	,, V. J. Mathai
8	,, C. Kunhan Nambudiripad	22	,, A. B. Salem
9	,, E. Ikkanda Warriar	23	Mrs. C. R. Iyyunni
10	,, C. R. Iyyunni	24	,, Thankamma N. Menon
11	,, N. Govinda Pai	25	Dr. A. R. Menon
12	,, P. Govinda Menon	26	Mr. K. P. Kannan Nayar
13	,, N. V. Subbarayan Chettiar	27	,, K. Achyuta Menon
14	,, C. J. Luiz	28	,, P. J. George

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29 Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja
30 Dr. T. Verghese
31 Rao Bahadur M. Narayana Menon
32 Rao Shaib I. N. Menon
33 Mr. V. K. Aravindaksha Menon
34 Rama Varmha Tampuran,
35 Mr. M. Raman Menon
36 ,, K. V. Menon

Noes

1 Mr. M. K. Devassy
2 ,, T. V. Subramania Ayyar
3 ,, P. Achutha Menon
4 ,, K. S. Panikkar
5 ,, K. R. Viswambharan
6 Mr. V. K. Krishnankutty
7 ,, B. M. Peter
8 ,, V. K. Bhaskara Menon
9 ,, C. V. Iyyu

Deputy President: 36 for, and 9 against.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* The neutrals may also be noted.

Deputy President: It is not necessary.

Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Ernakulam):* Some members may be absent and therefore it is necessary to note the neutrals also.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* It was the practice of the House to record the names of neutrals.

Deputy President: The practice has been in both ways.

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* There are a large number of neutrals.

Deputy President: The neutrals may also be noted.

Neutrals

(1) Mr. A. L. Antony
(2) ,, T. K. Nayar
(3) ,, A. Eachara Menon
(4) ,, A. V. Moothedan
(5) ,, K. M. Ibrahim
(6) ,, M. L. Joseph

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* I move that this being an important measure, be referred to a Committee consisting of the Advocate-General, Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar (the Municipal Chairman of Trichur), Mr. A. Eachara Menon (Municipal Chairman of Chittur), Mr. V. N. Damodaran Nambiar, Mr. V. K. Kutty (Panchayat President), Mr. A. B. Salem (Ex-Municipal Chairman).

Mr. M. K. Devassy *(Adur):* Sir, I take objection to the Hon'ble Minister's referring to the qualifications of the members.

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* Why, what objection is there? There is no *Kumbhakonam* in it.

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Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar *(Nemmara):* What is the meaning of this word *Kumbhakonam* ?

Mr. P. Govinda Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu):* It is a well-reputed town in the Tamil Nad.

Deputy President: The Minister is perfectly justified in giving the qualifications of the members who are to form the Select Committee, since by his motion he recommends to the House that these members may be accepted by the House for constituting the Committee.

Mr. M. K. Devassy *(Adur):* I may be allowed to make a submission that the Minister's proposal has neither been opposed nor supported. Unless a necessity arises whereby the qualifications of the members should be placed before the House, I take objection to do so.

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* Mr. M. Sivarama Menon, Ex-Municipal Chairman of Ernakulam, and the Minister will also be in the Committee.

Motion put and carried.

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Deputy President: The motion is already carried and therefore there cannot be any more discussion on it.

Dr. A. R. Menon *(Minister for Rural Development):* I move that the Committee may be given two months' time to report.

Deputy President: The Advocate-General will be the Chairman and the Committee is to report within two months.

The Cochin Insolvency Act Amendment Bill—*(cont.)*

Mr. N. Govinda Pai *(Nominated):* Mr. President, Sir, when my Hon'ble Friend from Nemmara, Mr. Subramania Ayyar, violently opposed the Bill, he had in mind a group of people quite different from those that I find here in Mattancheri. That is, he was thinking of an unregistered banker who was depending for his deposits on poor destitute widows and other poor people who have to face a great loss if such a banker goes to liquidation. These set of bankers, or rather hundi merchants, want to collect usurious rates of interest. This leads them always to invest their capital very insecurely and consequently in course of time they go to liquidation. In such a case, it is really hard that the poor investors should be allowed to lose any part of their deposits by giving any advantage to such a

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